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EDITORIAL

Why Politics ?

The General Committee of the World's Student Christian Federation, at its meeting in August 1946, set up a small Political Commission to encourage the study of political questions and the exchange of views between the different national movements. Such study and exchange has gone on, fruitfully and on the whole unobtrusively, through the medium of documents and correspondence. This issue of The Student World has been planned by the Commission, largely on the basis of a discussion which took place at the Lundsberg W.S.C.F. Conference in August 1947. There is no attempt here to define a political position for the Federation, but simply to clarify certain issues on which it is important that Christians should know where they stand.

We are fully aware that some readers think that we should avoid the discussion of politics in the pages of The Student World, and indeed in the Federation itself. This argument is based upon the truth that as Christians we are primarily concerned with the Gospel. Now let us freely admit that political discussion may be a way of escaping from the demands of Jesus Christ upon our lives. But so indeed may be worship and Bible study and evangelism. Any human activity may provide an excuse for avoiding

a face to face encounter with our Lord. It is, however, precisely our primary concern with the Gospel, and our determination not to evade Christ's call, that has led us into the discussion of politics as Christians. Our aim is to do our political thinking in the light of our worship and Bible study, and in relation to our evangelism. When we try to keep our politics separate from our religion, and out of our movements, it usually means that our political opinions will not stand the full light of the Gospel upon them. And, in so far as that can justifiably be alleged, our Christian witness is thereby weakened.

There are, of course, students in all our movements who are indifferent to politics out of immaturity, ignorance or fear. It is not our business to force them into being politically-minded. Yet it is right to remind all our contemporaries that the politics of today, if they do not at the moment touch their liberty or threaten their existence, are certainly liable to do so tomorrow. In Palestine, as we write, politics are holding in suspense the whole future of two peoples, and of the Holy City itself. It is a vivid parable of the life of the world. The continued existence, not only of mankind, but of Christianity in so far as it depends upon mankind, is supported by the shaky structure of world politics. Christians are therefore doubly concerned with constructive political thought and action.

But how does political discussion within the Federation help to this end? Firstly, by teaching us basic political facts of which we have no business to be ignorant; secondly, by helping us to think as Christians in the political realm, just as we have to do in the realm of personal living; thirdly, by introducing us to the varied theological and political insights which are part of the riches of our ecumenical fellowship. We surely have a moral obligation to carry out such study and exchange while we can think soberly, and speak with impunity, not only because some of our number no longer can do so, but in order that, if some crisis should come upon us, we may have so prepared ourselves that we can act politically out of Christian conviction. This is not said to create alarm but rather to remove

the reason for alarm. The frightened people are the people who, when their accustomed world is shaken, do not know what they believe. Christians should know what they believe in political, as well as in private, life.

It is significant that the Political Commission did not choose for the subject of the studies in this issue some such title as How to Build a Better World, but frankly and crudely Christians and Power-Politics. Gone are the days when we could pretend that through our study circles and resolutions and petitions we were adding stone by stone to the structure of world peace. We know now, or we ought to know, that the interaction of different forms of power makes policy. We influence the future more by the food we eat, and the freedom upon which we insist, than by the opinions we pronounce or the advice we offer to public men. We are caught in the machinery of power and it is there that we must act as Christians. Any separation of our faith and worship from this entanglement of our lives is like creating pleasant gardens round a factory without concern as to whether it is manufacturing for the essential needs of men or for their destruction.

Does it seem strange that there should be more realism on this point in the World's Student Christian Federation than in the International Union of Students? We think of the former as religious, and the latter as secular, but it is precisely religious thinking that reckons with the conflict of power, because it is aware of that opposition to God, which it calls sin. It knows that men and women are not disinterested, and are therefore bound to be in opposition to one another. The Federation unites students whose political differences are profound, in the name of Jesus Christ, in Whom they find forgiveness. The I.U.S., as a secular organisation, is seeking to unite students in the name of democracy, but that is a question-begging term, which is apt to be used as a smoke-screen to prevent clear thinking. A secular student organisation can only exist if it has either some practical common purposes, or a common political creed. To pretend that you can have an inclusive world organisation at the same time as one

which is dominated by communist political philosophy is surely hypocrisy. For an International Union of Students either course would be honourable; failure to choose is dishonourable.

Must the Christian therefore decide that he is on one side of the conflict of power, or the other? We cannot be indifferent to the great struggle in which some of us have been silenced, and all of us are involved, the struggle between the marxist and Western conceptions of democracy, symbolised now in great international blocs. But that does not mean that we accept the present alignments in the "cold war" as the last word on power-politics for a Christian. Two quite simple factors disturb this view. Firstly, many of our fellow-Christians, and fellow-members of the World's Student Christian Federation, are on the other side of the so-called "iron curtain" from ourselves. Secondly, Christians everywhere differ in their judgment and experience as to the most evil or dangerous manifestations of power in our day. Therefore our business is to subject every aspect of power to the test of our understanding of Christ.

It is not to be supposed that we should find this situation easy. It is far more difficult to think and live politically as a Christian than to sketch plans for a utopia. Nor will we necessarily find ourselves convinced by any of the courses of political action suggested in the following articles. Some may appear too facile or limited, others too vague or empirical. But at least they will help us to see the nature of the problem and to drive in some iron wedges of conviction for footholds. Yet the Christian in power-politics is not really like a lonely climber on a rockface, he is more like a traveller in the midst of quicksands, whose feet are always on the solid ground, and that ground is the living and eternal reality of Jesus Christ. All the writers in this issue hold the belief that only on that ridge of firm ground can they go forward. So we have come full circle to evangelism. Our witness to Jesus Christ will have some meaning to our contemporaries if it is a witness in this political situation of hate and fear in which they find themselves.

R.C.M.

Christians and Power-Politics

PENRY JONES

This issue of *The Student World* is concerned with the problems of the Christian in politics ; and politics in these days is a total term concerned with the relations of men in communities and with the relations of communities to one another. To a modern sociologist, like Lewis Mumford, men live in cities and communities firstly to preserve life, and secondly to live the good life. The Hebrews however were clearer about the terms upon which a good and just community could be maintained. They held that in order "that ye may live and multiply and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers" the commandments of God must be obeyed (Deuteronomy 8 : 1). This same chapter of Deuteronomy goes on to list the produce of that land, the food and iron and brass, those material bases of life given by God and without which no community can survive. The danger point to the community is when "thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth" and "so shall ye perish ; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God" (Deut. 8 : 17, 20).

This is the beginning of Hebrew and Christian political theory. There are the material resources which in their use and deployment constitute power — a power given of God. The object of politics is to regulate the use of that power for the good of human societies, but the rebellious and anarchic nature of sinful man threatens the health of these societies with the self-interested use of power. Therefore power must be used subject to laws in obedience to God ; and thus the state must use

power to enforce the supremacy of the law over mis-directed and irresponsible power, lest power become a law unto itself. But the use of power to establish law is a constant danger, for power corrupts its users (even if it be the State coercing to maintain the law) and the final authority must be the use of power to the glory of God. Thus the basic task in politics is to govern the use of power by law to maintain justice and order, and the freedom to live to the glory of God, in a human society.

The Christian dilemma

This however is the realm of the Old Testament and, although justice and equity are generalized approximations to love, they are not the binding forces of the Kingdom of the New Testament. There the rule of righteousness is maintained not by coercion, for Christ has rejected the normal political methods of maintaining a human kingdom, but by the voluntary acceptance of, and free entrance into, the laws of the Kingdom. There is the Christian dilemma — to live according to the laws of this world and according to the law of love. This one foot in the gutter and one foot on the pavement process is often too much for the Christian. He becomes either entirely "political, losing the insights of his citizenship in the Kingdom of Christ, or entirely pietistic, believing he can live in the Kingdom rejecting all power and all politics." Another temptation, finding favour in the Western churches, is to obscure the ambiguities in the use of power and optimistically to identify a particular political order with the Kingdom. It is undoubtedly true that the Christian must struggle to make the human order approximate to the Kingdom, as well as to maintain a just and ordered basis; but to have ideals of the Kingdom without reference to the facts of justice and order is not only foolish but positively dangerous.

The separation of ideals from power realities has done much to vitiate the politics of many Christians in

the West. So far from recognising "power" as a good thing invented by God they have feared and mistrusted it, have clamoured against "power-politics" and have often ended in rejecting politics altogether. This idyllic political outlook is particularly prevalent in those areas conditioned by the nineteenth century liberal-democratic tradition, and needs some balance lest it produce evil effects.

These ideals can be roughly stated as a belief that a free press and free education, plus one vote per man and a democratic constitution, can establish the Kingdom of Heaven ; that love must be preached and shown to all men to ensure a better understanding, and that a better understanding will charm away all mistrust between the great nations. The great ideals of freedom, truth, justice and love are held up, and political situations judged in simple black and white terms according to whether they do or do not conform to them. These are true ideals and must be maintained but they must bear some relation to the facts and it should be recognised that their realization is dependent upon power and stability in a nation.

"The good that I would I do not"

National ideals may be good but good intentions do not necessarily mean good government. The democratic procedure strives to maintain checks on the government entrusted with the power for the maintenance of law ; but in every society there are centres of power unchecked by the electorate. The question is not only whether everyone has a vote but also who owns the press, who produces the films, who controls labour, and who holds the capital. These are power facts the idealists often discount. And this is illustrated in any organisation. It is not just a case of having a perfect constitution but also of knowing who controls the executive, who gets out the magazines and the agendas, and who greets the callers in the office. Lest we should run away with the

idea that this power ambiguity is true only for secular politicians, let us recognise it as a fact in the Church itself, for the phenomenon of the rich man who directs the affairs of the local Church is widely known.

The second danger of dividing ideals from facts is that the Christian may accept, — as his nation in its righteousness often does — a generalization. He may lay bare the ambiguities in another nation, and meanwhile celebrate the incorruptibility of his own. It is often held that the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. symbolize liberal democracy and individual freedom, and others say that the U.S.S.R. represents equalitarian democracy and social justice ; but these are generalizations. There is in fact no full social equality in the U.S.S.R. and few people are less free than the people of African descent in the U.S.A. and in the British Empire.

There again the ideals of liberty are partially realised in the United Kingdom and in the U.S.A., because there is power and a measure of stability. It was useless that Britain, as a dominant, if very moral, power, should ask Germany to act according to ideals, when Germany observed that Britain was satisfied with the *status quo* and Germany was not. Similarly it was as little use for the Western powers to talk to the Indian "depressed classes" about the blessings of individual liberty when because of their poverty they had never experienced liberty. Western liberty may indeed have gained much of its economic foundations from the poverty (cheap labour) of the Indian and the Chinese. The poor fear poverty more than they fear regimentation. There is no freedom for the poor man because he lacks the power to resist the pressure of the more powerful. Thus for the Western Churches to have ideals of liberty is right, but to talk about them without also discussing justice is to make the South East Asian, who is dissatisfied with the *status quo*, believe that "liberty" is a catch phrase with no truth in it, used to disguise the desire of the Western nations to maintain the *status quo*, since they

enjoy the freedom their power gives them. Ideals at home may therefore appear as power-politics abroad.

The conflict of the real and the ideal is of course true for ourselves as persons. Each of us declares a belief in certain ideals and each of us falls short in our achievements. We all present a pleasant picture to the world, conforming with the ideals of our community, but within there is the "skeleton in the cupboard" of our real thoughts and desires, and these may be our inner driving forces. The wider the gap between what we say we are and what we actually are, the wider the gap between the God we serve with our lips and the gods we really serve, the more dangerous is our condition. This is the truth the Church and Freud maintain of persons, and the truth Marx and Nietzsche have maintained about our human societies.

Our nation may proclaim truth, freedom and justice, but the desires of the people often conflict with these ideals. The popular films and literature illustrate the depth and direction of their real desires and it is not often a desire for either truth or justice. In fact it illustrates a desire for power. This emotional power-drive, underlying the idealisms of a modern state, can be the pre-condition for fascism in which power becomes a law unto itself, and a Christian's unrelated idealism can conduce to that pre-condition.

Then again a nation may talk about ideals of truth and freedom, but its people may not experience those ideals in fact. As the ideals become less related to the real, so people lose their belief in the efficacy of those ideals and worship the real, which means power. If for instance men and women find themselves the prey of blind economic forces, the reality of poverty, the reality of insecurity, the reality of injustice, they will begin to fear a freedom that leaves them at the mercy of power, — uncontrolled in most cases. They will grow to suspect this talk of ideals, to hate the ideals that form a whited sepulchre to their society, and will turn to seek security in power itself. Thus the Nazis could exalt a cult of

power and exploit the hatred, lust and cruelty, which form the emotional drives of people.

This then is the danger for any society where professed ideals do not conform to the facts of power. Politics are thus for the Christian concerned with power and there are no politics, *but* power-politics. What we usually criticise as "power-politics" is the use of power subject to no law.

Power in international relationships

In this sinful world the chief duty of each government, whatever its citizens may believe idealistically, will appear in its own eyes to be the safeguarding of its "vital interests". Whatever British ideals may have been, her politicians have recognised Belgium, Gibraltar, Egypt, Iraq and Singapore as "vital interests". Then the "prestige" a nation has is not just because of its moral pre-eminence but is also the recognition of its power by other nations.

Power seems to expand with a volition of its own. The energies of a people expand — economically, culturally and politically. The reason why the English language was understood by 80 % of the delegates to the Oslo Conference was not because English was a very flexible tongue, but because Anglo-Saxon economic power is dominant. Power expands until it meets with other power. The pressure of the United Kingdom and the U.S.S.R. on Iran is greater than the pressure of Iran upon either the United Kingdom or the U.S.S.R. Therefore in a world of massive power concentrations, there is expansion until they come up against each other. Because China and Greece are divided, they become political vacuums into which the greater powers must expand. Thus Britain must hold "key bases", the U.S.A. has the Truman Doctrine and the U.S.S.R. has her Eastern frontiers, since they are "vital interests". "Protection" is the term used by great powers in this activity, and they all proclaim a moral purpose for such dependencies. Kant pointed out: "the desire of every

state is to arrive at a condition of perpetual peace by conquering the world — if that were possible". When a great power looks like achieving its domination, the lesser powers combine against it and a "balance of powers" is arrived at. Thus although nationally the law may contain power, the only order so far arrived at to control international anarchy has been the "balance of power". Thus all questions have their facets of power and of principle.

The Church and power

The Church is inevitably involved in power. The Gospel was not spread in the East without money, ships, schools and communications. The Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam is only possible because of the power inherent in modern technology, money, telegraph systems, etc. Thus the scientific power that threatens the world is also the power that is the material basis for a World Church.

The Christian sees the necessity for power. He knows the danger of the vast demonic forces inherent in the industrial technocracies and the psychology of the masses of a nation. It is important then that he should accept the fact of power and with his knowledge of the perverted use of power through man's sin he must strive to seek and maintain its submission to law.

Knowing that nations are as moved by self-interest as persons are, he must beware of the moral righteousness of his own nation and must be true to a loyalty beyond loyalty to his people. Thus he is again divided, potentially a good citizen and potentially a "quisling". However difficult it may seem, he must go on relating his Kingdom of power and law to the Kingdom of Love. These then are the main problems confronting the Christian in politics and against this background he must make his political decisions. There is no certainty; the only abiding city is beyond politics and this "other-worldliness" of the man who knows that nothing can

separate him from the love of God is the source of a realism that cannot be disillusioned by the destruction of false political hopes ; it is the source of a serenity that cannot be stampeded by the general lack of standards and of desire for law. However relative the issues may be, there are places where the Christian must stand and say "I can no other".

Ideals and Power Today

JOHN DESCHNER

The Political Commission of the W.S.C.F. has planned this issue of *The Student World* as an analysis of power. My task is a simple one : to point out the temptations of political idealism for the Christian and to emphasize that in entering the political arena, the Christian is entering a struggle for power, more or less obvious, where talk about the best of all possible worlds is not only irrelevant but dangerous. That should be no news to Christian students of this generation. Yet we have betrayed our failure to understand this elemental truth too many times not to need frequent reminders, especially in these days when the daily frustration of our political hopes tempts us to an equally dangerous irrelevancy — political cynicism.

Participation and withdrawal

One brief word of defence, however, at the outset : let us not imagine that in beginning our study of politics with an analysis of power — the dynamics of participation — that we are belittling the Christian significance,

or perhaps even the ultimate political significance, of authentic and responsible withdrawal. Some Christians are called to the heat of the visible political battles, while others are called to the no less trying struggles of non-participation. And there is no easy logic for reconciling the two positions. Many have pointed out that British pacifism in the late 1930's directly contributed to the outbreak of war. Hitler understood what many pacifists did not: that those not against him were for him. By working for a "third way" the pacifists cancelled out their effectiveness as opponents to Hitler and contributed to that lack of effective resistance which the *Fuehrer* calculated so nicely. It is easy and tempting to read the responsible British pacifist right out of the picture along with his more naive brother. However, though we here carry our analysis into the arena, our Lord still forbids us to adopt the judgements of the arena. The temptation to accept the world's definition of the political struggle must be resisted. Christians understand that the real struggle was, and is, between Christ and the powers of darkness in both Britain and Germany. And in this struggle God's Will is always larger and more demanding than any particular course of action the Christian may choose. Further, Christians are always responsible to, and judged by, the full demands of divine will. Thus *we* cannot judge the ultimate relevance of withdrawing from what the world judges to be the political battle. Neither can we refuse to follow our Lord into these battles. The full demands of God's Will require us, and Christian charity encourages us, to affirm that the logic of participation and the witness of withdrawal must both figure in our Christian understanding of politics.

So, understanding that the following analysis will necessarily err in what it excludes, let us look at our involvement — as Christians — in the power struggle which is politics. The over-riding consideration is, of course, that like it or not, we are involved in politics. We are Christian citizens. Though we acknowledge *one*

Lord, we accept the privileges and are subject to the just responsibilities of the state. In so far as politics are concerned, the substantive and sinful reality is that we are citizens. This means that we not only are involved in politics, but in politics as they are, and not necessarily as we wish they were. Others in this issue will deal with the standards which the Christian can use for guidance in this involvement. The purpose of this article is to look at some of the characteristics of the power struggle today. I shall mention three :

1. *In a mature political struggle ideals are means rather than ends.* So long as the political situation is immature, so long as the nations are in the preliminary stages of jockeying for position, or so long as what Schuman calls the "surfeited nations" are securely in control, basic ideological considerations can influence the course of international politics. Disarmament was a live consideration in the 1920's. The Kellogg-Briand Pact was possible in 1928. But when the political situation matures, when the balance of power becomes a delicate equilibrium, when the "surfeited nations" are faced with real challenge, ideological considerations, even for the "have nots", become less determinative even as they become in a propaganda sense more useful. When the issue is finally drawn, as with Germany after 1933, political ideals and ideologies become means rather than ends. It is the sure characteristic of unchecked political power that it becomes its own end. Military power is its logical extension, and war its ultimate consequence and justification.

Let me give an example from the contemporary situation. Last summer at Oslo, the French asked the Americans whether altruism was really the motive for the Marshall Plan. My personal answer at that time was both yes and no. Yes, because for many millions of Americans there was and is a genuine desire to help rebuild Europe. No, because it was

all too clear that in quarters where our foreign policy is planned, the Marshall Plan was an economic weapon for the containment of Russian power. As the plan matured, this became much clearer. While in this instance altruism and American interests coincided, making sharp judgments difficult, it is probably true that in the final debates Congress was moved only incidentally by altruism; the determining consideration was openly defended as the containment of Russia.

Take another example, again from American foreign policy. While we defend our foreign policy as motivated by a desire to secure freedom, justice and security to the peace-loving peoples of the world (and let no one doubt the sincerity with which these ideals are held), we find ourselves in the embarrassing position of having to support reactionary regimes in several crucial countries in order ostensibly to serve these very ideals. The painful realization for an American is that in those parts of the world where the international political issue is really drawn, the ideology for which we stand is without exception subordinate to military considerations. Worse than that, the ideology for which we stand is used in defending the denial of that very ideology.

In short, the appeal to, and discussion of, political ideals or ideologies in a mature power struggle for the purpose of seriously altering the uses of power is fruitless. Quite the reverse, the demands of power determine the uses of ideology. The appeal to ideology is, as a Swiss friend once said, like trying to fill the bathtub by turning off the light.

2. *Neutrality is dead.* The present over-simplification of the political struggle for power (Russia and the U.S.A.) underlines the moral truth that neutrality is impossible. In earlier days when the balance of power was a complex organisation of several centres of power whose conflicts of interests could cancel each

other out, it was somewhat more possible to maintain the fiction of neutrality. At times the attempt was made to justify neutrality on the basis of national vocation. That is to say, so long as it was felt that idealistic political pretensions were the dynamics of politics, it was possible to maintain that a nation's participation in the power struggle was a matter of deliberate choice. While this notion has been widespread among political laymen (making possible in a democratic state the phenomenon of isolationism), it has seldom been seen in the foreign ministries where neutrality has usually been grasped as a fortuitous and less costly means of participating in the power struggle. Today when the political world revolves about only two centres of power, the opportunity for neutrality is destroyed ; nations are either for or against one or the other centre of power, and, with the passing of the opportunity for neutrality, the pretense of neutrality withers. There is no state where the struggle is not either going on or decided.

The disappearance of nations as neutrals is a parable of the individual's dilemma — a dilemma which has always existed but has not always been clearly seen. There is no citizen who does not morally have to accept responsibility for both his nation's involvement and its particular political role in the present power struggle. And this responsibility is no less clear where the citizen has no option of supporting or opposing his government than in those states where an open option still exists. All are involved ; all are responsible ; all throw weight to one side or the other.

This insight is not new to the Christian. He knows that, as he must choose between good and evil, so he must also choose — indeed he has already chosen — between the relatively better and relatively worse in the political alternatives offered. To be sure, he must choose, asking God's forgiveness, for the alternatives are relative and God is good. Yet

it stands that only God is on both sides of the struggle ; the citizen who pretends to absent himself from his responsibility and involvement on one side or the other (except as God calls him to do so, and even then the responsibility remains), is simply blind to his own sin, which is his pretension to play God.

3. *The demonic uses of power.* Power in itself is part of creation, and therefore good. Let us be specific : its obvious elements are such things as population, raw materials, transportation, communication, industry, labour, commerce, agriculture, military might, etc., and the abundance or scarcity of these elements. In addition, it includes such non-material realities as ideology, prestige, history, morale, propaganda, public opinion, etc.

Therefore, in saying that politics is a struggle for power, we cannot afford to overlook that the elements of political power have been given to man to be used for the glory of God. Political power is simply that which makes it possible to implement the national will (not necessarily the collective will for it may be a minority will) and that will, as the Old Testament prophets teach us, may be either obedient or disobedient.

It is an indication of our sinfulness, therefore, that we habitually define political power as that which makes it possible for one nation or group to control other nations or groups. And it is in the fact that the human will, being corrupt, corrupts power, that the fatal weakness of political idealism as a dynamic for practical political policy shows most clearly. For our political ideals are rarely what is possible, never what is good. Usually our political ideals are what *we* want. It is because our political ideals are rooted in the same will that corrupts our administration of power that the ideals are powerless to stand against the demands of power.

But whence come the demands of power? Here we must deal with more than the corruption of the human will.

Let us take an example. For purposes of illustration let us over-simplify and say that American power today rests on natural resources, the industry to develop these resources, the capital to run the industry and the military means to defend these elements of power. In the early history of America, those who derived their power from natural resources (particularly the land) were secure in control. Jefferson could seriously base his concept of democracy in part on the continuance of an agricultural electorate. But as we developed our industry the control of the land by those who used the land was challenged. Our Civil War was the decisive phase of the struggle between those whose power rested in land and those whose power rested in industry and money. Following the Civil War, money and industry assumed control not only of industry but also of the land and the natural resources. The next decisive stage set in with the two recent world wars: military power, which was heretofore used, broadly speaking for defense, began to become relatively more important. It is not entirely fantastic to interpret present American politics as an early stage in the struggle between financial and military power for dominance. Increasingly, military considerations dominate foreign policy and are beginning to play a larger role in determining domestic policy. (It is interesting parenthetically to observe here the classic determinism progressing from pure democracy to representative democracy to oligarchy to military tyranny.)

The point is that the dynamic in this development, while using human selfishness at every point, is something larger, more sinister and apparently more purposeful than human disobedience. And should the cycle complete itself and military power destroy

itself, we shall have to say in the ultimate sense that this dynamic of power is self-contradictory.

Some social sciences have been content to think of this dynamic as impersonal and call it determinism. Christian thought never conceives of evil as impersonal; evil is always personal. And the characteristics of this self-contradictory dynamic are precisely those which the Christian understanding has seen in the demonic. In short, for our Christian analysis of political power, we need the depth of the demonic to understand the forces with which we are dealing.

For a Christian to accept the widespread view that in the current political situation nations struggle for ideals, is to be fatally blind to the immensity of the forces of evil which are moving in and through our history. The demons are fallen angels. Our ideals look benevolent. Knowing our self-righteousness, however, we would do well at least to suspect that the devil is hard at work with them, clouding our vision to the real dynamics of our political decisions.

It is not my task here to show how this understanding conditions the political witness of the Christian. It is enough perhaps to suggest that in this perspective, the cosmic work of our Lord in redeeming the political order is our final hope and victory. And our encouragement is to accept our part in His suffering by humbly taking our place in the political struggle, conscious of its cosmic proportions.

In the power struggle we are dealing with mighty forces. Our armor for the struggle is not political idealism, but our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to manifest His victory over them. It is properly our struggle only in so far as we are in Him.

Minister of God or Instrument of Satan ?

PHILIPPE MAURY

The chief characteristic of the world in which we live is the predominance of power, first in the form of physical force, but equally in the form of ideologies, propaganda, all the systems which tend to dehumanize man and to turn him into a machine at the mercy of pressures which come from without. This age has been called the age of the "masses". By that we mean those great crowds of men each individual member of which surrenders, whether willingly or unconsciously, his independence of judgment, of thought, of decision and action, his very identity, and no longer exists save as an anonymous cell, a cog in the total machine. In a mass-society the individual has no part to play and does not count. The "mass" has taken to itself the functions and activities which normally belong to man. In a society like this, power, considered as force which is alien to man, appears at its maximum ; it takes the place of man, paralyses him, eliminates him as a factor in political or social life, if it does not even go so far as to suppress his spiritual life.

We find ourselves at this point facing a sharp crisis, but we must not shut our eyes to the fact that "power" has always existed ; even in the elementary social cell of the family, power is present, since the parents exercise a certain power over the children. In every nation there are public authorities who bear the title, and that not accidentally, of "public authorities". And even in the Church, bishops, synods, all the ecclesiastical authorities exercise their own power over the Church and its members.

It would be possible to write a long analysis of power from the historical, juridical or sociological point of view. Let it suffice here to attempt to explain its meaning from the Christian, that is the biblical, angle. The task of the Christian is never to build his thought on practical experience, but to see that experience in the light of the revelation of God. Such a judgment naturally implies that, while the subject involved must be thoroughly studied, it finds its point of departure in an idea which is properly theological.

The biblical conception of power

When we try to define the biblical conception of power applied to the political sphere, we must be struck that in the thought of Apostle Paul, for example, the concept of power, which he mentions several times, appears always in a secondary place and in relation to the fundamental concept of the order of God. Magistrates exist, Paul told the Romans (Rom. 13 : 1-3) and, if we translate the Greek literally, "powers" exist, all of which receive their authority from God Himself in order to maintain an order which He wills ; an order which makes it possible for us to "lead a good and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2 : 2). These public authorities are only to be feared by such as violate this divine order. It is against the latter that the powers make use of physical control and the power of the sword which the will of God has reserved for those "ministers" whom God has placed over us for good (Rom. 13 : 4). "Be subject unto the higher powers", said Paul not from mere respect of established authorities, or for fear of punishment, but "for conscience' sake".

To judge from these few verses in the Epistle to the Romans, the existence of public authorities is legitimate and divinely legitimate ; further still, the use by these powers even of the methods of human power, brute force, is not less in accordance with the divine plan. This means that the Christian cannot be content with

a vague pacifist idealism and condemn all power as stained with sin. But at the same time he cannot entrench himself in a position of cynical realism and endow all power with divine authority. For the sacred nature of these powers is not inherent in their nature, but is a seal set upon them and constantly renewed by service, the ministry which God has given them to exercise in the world. So the Christian can be neither an anarchist — for God sets up these powers to represent him in the social order ; nor an enthusiast for authority in itself — for the public authorities hold their power over us in the name of God alone for services rendered to Him.

The question of resistance

The reader may say : this is all very well, but apparently the powers which Paul exhorts us to obey for conscience' sake are too often in direct contradiction to our Christian conscience. These are days in which the most pressing question seems to be not subjection to powers, but resistance to them "for conscience' sake". Can we in any sense talk of totalitarian powers as the ministers of God, and so has the Christian a duty to obey them ? This is the moment to study other texts of the Bible, for instance in the Book of Revelation whose author had to do with powers which strikingly resembled modern totalitarian regimes, in demanding of men, as do the ideologies of our day, a total allegiance whose token and symbol is the worship of power. When the modern reader studies the forms of Roman emperor worship he has no difficulty in imagining the horror and the anguish of the early Christians. Nazism and communism have not been alone in exacting a similar worship under the threats of violent or silent persecution. The powerful in the world, according to Revelation, are no longer the ministers of God. They are those against whom is shown the wrath of God (Rev. 6 : 15) ; they are the ministers of Satan who persecute the Church

(Rev. 2 : 10), the slaves of the great whore (Rev. 17), and glory is promised to those who resist the powers and pay for their resistance with their lives (Rev. 7 : 13).

What does all this mean ? It means, as Paul said earlier, that the powers of this world draw their divine power from the service which they render to God and not from their nature as powers. The day that they cease to serve God and serve only themselves, in this way becoming the object of their own existence and activity, that day Christians are called to cease their subjection and to turn to resistance. This is simply put in the book of Acts, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5 : 29).

At the same time, however, that very Book of Revelation which is so eager in praising resistance to the wicked powers of this world proclaims that in the last days, "the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour" into the Kingdom of God (Rev. 21 : 24). Without entering into the symbolical language of Revelation we cannot fail to notice even in these persecuting kings, on whom the wrath of God is to be brought down, something of their sacred character and of their divine investiture. In modern parlance this would mean that powers which are most manifestly hostile to God and to His will, for example the Gestapo, are still clothed in a mysterious way with the authority which God has given them. The Christian must disobey them, but not only for conscience' sake. He cannot be content to ignore them once for all. Just like the Church of The Netherlands during the nazi occupation, the Christian continues to pray for those whom he is resisting ; he prays not only for the men who are persecuting him, but for the very powers of persecution. He implores God to enlighten them, to reshape their activity, to re-establish their power on the one solid foundation of the divine order. Even in this extreme case he is not an anarchist ; he is respecting the powers and their authority.

God's order never permanently established

On the deepest level then, when the Christian looks at political powers, ought he not always, or nearly always, to see in them at once the minister of God and the instrument of Satan? Must he not always be ready, on the one hand, for obedience, respect and fear and, on the other, for resistance? And how could it be otherwise? The order which God wills for this world is not of the same nature as the world. It can never be permanently established there. It can never really exist. It appears only as a renewing or purifying action of God through the mediation of the powers which He establishes and in the very heart of a disorder which is the natural result of human sin. Besides, the men who perform this function in the name of God remain in all their actions mere men, sinners like anyone else. We may dream, as many do, of a state whose officers are Christian and who would thus establish in the world the order of God. This is to forget that, Christians though we be, redeemed and with the promise of resurrection and eternal life with God, we still remain sinners. This is to confuse the Church and the Kingdom of God with an anticipation of resurrection and glory. Whether they are Christians or not, those in power still remain at the mercy of all the revolts to which Satan tempts man. And since political powers, although divinely ordained, remain human concerns, they are at one and the same time institutions of God and instruments of Satan.

To speak in concrete terms, the Christian may not use any facile classification saying that one regime or government, in spite of its mistakes, or even its crimes, represents the Will of God and so deserves our obedience, while another which is definitely in revolt can only be resisted. Here, as in other matters, the Christian may not withdraw behind the shelter of a system, or abdicate responsibility, whether personal or collective, in favour

of a code. He must judge, decide and act on the basis of the particular acts of such-and-such a regime or government, even though it be to risk error — nay with the certainty of error — since he knows that he may also in repentance and humility appeal to God's pardon and have his error removed. He will obey or resist according to the inspiration of the moment ; that is to say, he will ask God to be inspired with the necessary discernment. While not submitting to the powers simply because they exist, neither does he resist them simply because they are sinful. For all power carries the stain of sin. Like the Apostle Peter before the Sanhedrin, the Christian answers those in authority, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard". (Acts 4 : 19-20.)

Power as the temptation of the Church

This text leads us quite naturally to speak of the strange relation introduced by the Bible between the Church and the powers. The Church, which may be described by its vocation of "speaking of that which we have seen and heard" with regard to Jesus Christ, cannot use power as a means of action. The Church is not of this world and must therefore be innocent of its methods and desires. But the Church is in the world because it has been sent there by its Lord, and being there it cannot avoid having to do with the powers.

The story of the book of Acts reminds us that the constant tendency of the powers is to prevent the preaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself told the Church that it would be reviled and persecuted for His sake (Math. 5 : 11). Truly, the world of power cannot admit the power of the love of God. Nowhere is it seen more clearly than on the political plane, that God and fallen mankind are at variance. "No man can serve two masters... ye cannot serve God and Mammon". Mammon, the deification of earthly possessions, is as it were the symbol of the will

to power of human pride, which means of fundamental sin. If we worship Mammon it is because we would exist alone and independently of God, powerful and therefore free from all dependence, like the rich man who said to himself : "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease". But God intervenes, contrary to this self-satisfaction, this security of authority, with the stern admonition : "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke 12 : 20). God will not admit the will to human power.

The Church of God then cannot act as men act ; cannot set power before it as an aim, whether that power be riches, political influence, physical force in the service of evangelisation, even that which is best in culture and civilisation. From the very beginning of His ministry Jesus knew the temptation to power. "All this power will I give thee" (Luke 4 : 6) said Satan to Him and Jesus reminded him that God alone should be worshipped. On the political plane the great temptation of both the Church and the Christian is the temptation to power. We must particularly remind ourselves of this at a time when Christian political parties flourish with all the alarming ambiguity of the title and when Christians are tempted to adopt the cause of some particular civilisation, or some special ideology. The danger is no less great on whichever side of the spiritual iron curtain we may be ; no human power can become the Christian cause, for all are but human causes, all alike are vitiated by the same demonic will to power. Christian democrats and Christian marxists run the same danger of yielding to temptation and using human power for the service of God.

And yet the Christian may not be content with refusing all power as the instrument of Satan. He is called not to "withdraw from the world", but to "be in the world", this world of power, as the witness of Jesus Christ. He must remember that these powers which look so devilish are also "ministers of God" and, quite literally, ministers of God in the service of the Church.

God in His mysterious design willed that even those powers which seem made to persecute the Church should prove its defence and its guarantee. We see this clearly in the Epistle to Timothy ; if the Christian must pray for the powers that be it is because their task is to establish in society an order which will lead "all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2 : 4) ; in other words, because the state and the public authorities are given the task, if not of helping, at least of permitting the preaching of the Gospel which is the primary function of the Church. The State is not an end in itself, it exists for the Church. Not that we can allow to the state functions which are properly spiritual, as clericalism of one kind or another has often done in history : that would be a return to Judaism, to that material alliance which led to confusion between Israel-Church and Israel-Nation. The authority of our governments is not in the realm of faith, but must rather be openly manifested. Faith has only this one exclusive privilege, that of understanding the aim of this authority.

The freedom of the Church as the Christian's criterion

If we attempt a synthesis, we may say that by the effect of God's providence public authorities have the duty of making possible the preaching of the Gospel in a world which is characterized by the sinful human will to power, but that, further, if certain predominant powers did not act to control human lusts, the whole of humanity would be plunged in universal chaos. This is to explain implicitly what criterion the Christian may adopt for his attitude to public authority. He must in the first place make clear to himself how far a given government accomplishes, often unconsciously, its divine vocation as protector of the Church. Such a protection does not necessarily involve the support of the Church, although this eventuality, however dangerous, is not to be ignored. In other words the Christian must have as

an integral part of his personal political life — and this will determine his membership of a party, his vote for a candidate, his public office — the struggle for the freedom of the Church. Let us be more detailed here. It is only too easy today to fix the attention on that open totalitarian persecution which forbids the Church its existence or all evangelisation, or limits its preaching to “spiritual” matters which are considered inoffensive and wisely forbids any reference to the political demands of God. In such cases Satan is visible to the naked eye. But we must not close our eyes to the fact that there are other ways in which the Prince of powers interferes with the freedom of the Church. He may keep in scandalous distress large portions of the population, so that their very distress keeps them from the Gospel; or he may suggest to the Church that the civilisation in which it is grounded, and in which it has often fallen asleep, belongs of right to himself and is worthy to be defended — and this means that an idol is set up in a familiar form of “Christian civilisation”.

The freedom of the Church must be the criterion of the Christian's political action. But it is not a criterion to be mechanically applied, rather he must once more accept responsibility in testing authority and must regard the freedom of the Church not as the article of a code, but as a guiding line of the action of God. In a world of power this freedom does not exist, but is always in the act of beginning or in a state of crisis; and the task of the Christian is to step into this movement of flux or reflux to orientate it in a right direction and direct its course. This will mean in practice a continual struggle now against nazism, now against communism, now against capitalism, now against nationalism, in so far as one of them puts the liberty of the Church more particularly in danger at any given moment. But the Christian must never feel satisfied, for this freedom of the Church with regard to the powers can never be achieved as long as our world endures, nor can he ever fully identify himself with any of the prevailing powers,

nor accord them any support, save a tactical conditional and temporary support in whatever degree their particular nature erects them provisionally against the greatest danger of the moment. With regard to public authorities he must at the same time respect and obey the divine institution and denounce and oppose the instrument of Satan.

The assurance of the power of the Holy Spirit

A paradoxical situation, continued spiritual and political tension, frequently ineffectiveness in action and always the part to play of kill-joy — such is the lot of the Christian in the world of power. The position of being in permanent opposition to the powers of Satan would be untenable, if the Church were not assured of the gift of the power of the Holy Spirit. If the Christian hesitates, alarmed by this impossible calling, he has but to reread the first Epistle of John, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God... Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world” (I John 4 : 1, 4), and further on, “Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ?” (I John 5 : 4-5). To “try the spirits”, that is to pass judgment on the powers which surround us, seems almost impossible; still more impossible to struggle against them. But we have the promise by faith that we shall be able to accomplish this task and still more the assurance that victory is already won, since Jesus Christ is, before all, He who has overcome the powers and in Whom God has shown “the exceeding greatness of His power”, “which He wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead, and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, ... far above all power... not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Eph. 1 : 19-21).

By faith in Jesus Christ we are invested with a power greater than all human powers ; we do possess it, or rather it possesses us. We are ourselves unable to believe this, for the experience of our day seems to contradict it, and yet that is the meaning of the passage in the Epistle of John : our faith has overcome the world, His power is stronger than all human power. We may not be able to believe it, but we must believe it, for to doubt it would be to reject the very essence of the Gospel, the victory of Jesus Christ and the assurance that we share in it. This means the assurance of salvation. Now belief in this, means several things in the political sphere.

The responsibility of the Christian

As citizens we are called to take part in public life, we are co-responsible with the powers which God has instituted. Everything that has been said about these powers applies more or less directly to each individual ; for every citizen in the last resort possesses in the exercise of his rights a power which comes from God, while at the same time he for ever runs the risk of using these rights in the service of Satan if he yields to the titanic temptation of unlimited power. This is true of every man in so far as he is integrated in a political society. The situation of the Christian is even more complex. Over and above this common power he knows himself to be invested with the power of the Holy Spirit, and that he need not fear the opposition of rival authorities. He is in one sense the only citizen who need fear nothing ; he alone may go forward without question and without for ever trying to defend his position in the terms of power. On the plane of human power he has a function which he can fulfil without becoming the slave of all contingences in the political order. In other words he alone is able to avoid thinking and acting politically in a defensive and negative way. It has been said already that he is always in the opposition because he does not

belong to the world. But his opposition can be positive. He can refuse human programmes, not through fear of their probable result, but by reason of what he wishes to do himself. We live in an age of "antis": *anti*-fascism, *anti*-communism, *anti*-capitalism, *anti*-clericalism and the rest. If we take any such stand we must realise that we shall find ourselves in a position of inferiority where we can only think of self-defence. But the power of God needs no defence, since it has once for all overcome all power.

This all means that the Christian may dispense with any preoccupation as to what others are thinking and doing and may even neglect the power which they represent. Instead of ordering our political attitude after that of various parties and ideologies — whether to avoid supporting them, or to help them to success — we can go steadily forward without anxiety and without hesitation in the service of our one Lord. Once we are engaged in an army which is already victorious it is unnecessary to seek, or to fear, alliances since the equipment of the ally will always remain negligible in relation to our own strength, and since our ally of the moment can never, while sharing our success, become stronger than we are. So instead of being disturbed by the thought of the aid which our political commitment may bring to capitalists or communists we shall care for one thing alone: to remain faithful to Jesus Christ since He alone is the source of our strength. At the very beginning this demands a serious effort of reflection, of thought and of imagination. In the political sphere the Church has too long lived by the thought of others. Some continue in the liberal tradition of the eighteenth century, others have absorbed the essentials of marxism, but very few have undertaken the necessary effort to construct a body of original political thought which far from depending on secular ideologies is able both to criticize and use them.

The victory which may appear defeat

At the same time this demands a good dose of self-abnegation. The power of Jesus Christ is certainly stronger than the power of the world. But it is not of the same nature and its superiority is not to be seen clearly by human categories. His victory, as seen by faith, may sometimes seem like a defeat by human standards. The power of God is not to be grasped in terms of political effectiveness and the Christian who trusts in God, instead of in earthly power, is to all appearance destined to failure and ridicule also on the political plane. It matters little to him, so long as he believes in Jesus Christ. For then he knows that this sphere of political effectiveness is temporary and empty in relation to the new world which is to come. He must turn his back on effectiveness and success.

For in the end the power which the Christian has received is before all things witness and love. Witness means that he must show daily that the *raison d'être* of the world and of politics lies beyond the world and politics. In his political activity on the plane of power the Christian must remind his fellows that there exists elsewhere another form of power which is radically and infinitely stronger, and that all political life is but a poor reflection of the City of God. Love means to give concrete evidence of his certainty that the true nature and destiny of man does not proceed from the politics of power and from the barriers of pride and of egoism set up by power, but only from the saving love of Jesus Christ in which all men are one.

To put it briefly the Christian in a world of political power will be at the same time bolder and more ambitious than anyone else, and more sceptical and disinterested. On this level, as on all others, he cannot but be at the same time absent but present, pessimistic but in action, full of hope but without hopefulness. As has been

simply said, in the human community he is already a citizen of the City of God.

And yet this does not mean that we must accept ineffectiveness as a principle of political action, but merely that we must not be too preoccupied to learn, if in men's eyes we have chances of success. The possibility of failure must never stand as a justification of passivity or compromise, and our final aim must never be the earthly success of our plans. But if we made a rule out of what is but an exception, if we sought systematically for lost causes and found in failure the criterion of righteousness, we might possibly remain loyal to the unworldly nature of the faith, but we should undoubtedly have disavowed our vocation of witness and of love *in the world*.

Power and its Denial on the Cross

K. H. TING

"He came unto His own"; that was the Incarnation. "... and His own received Him not"; that was the tragedy of the Incarnation, and, more important for us, the tragedy of man.

The Son of God, in His Incarnation, identified himself with humanity, "and was made man". He became one of us. He lived and worked and ate with fellow-men. He shared in their joys and sorrows; He bore their burdens and sufferings. He understood their yearnings and took upon Himself their humiliations. As St. Paul puts it: "Though He was in the form of God He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And, being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." There we find the Christ who, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, "considered it proper in all things to be made like unto His brethren". "Because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted."

Identification and separation

But Christ did not merely identify Himself with men; He also had to separate Himself from them. As Hebrews goes on to say: "For it is fitting that we should have a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners", and "He in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning".

Christ identified Himself with men only to redeem men, but not at all to condone men. So, His identification

must stop before sin. He can have nothing to do with sin. Otherwise His identification would be completely meaningless and would amount to nothing but indulgence.

Thus, there are two modes of the existence of the Immanuel: identification and separation. They are the mystery and the tragedy of the Messiahship and, at the same time, its scandal and glory. We find the situation enacted again and again in the Gospels, finally issuing in the Cross. And we find the impact of that nature of the Christ no less acute in the personal life of the Christian. He knows only too well how the Christ is at once both intimate and yet uncompromising, understanding and yet demanding; how He loves intensely and yet judges penetratingly. Christ forgives, comforts and sympathizes; yet He rebukes, is severe and stern. Like St. Peter, we are drawn to Him by the charm of the Person. But also like St. Peter, we resist being drawn to Him because of our sin and we exclaim, "Depart from me for I am a sinner".

Herein is part of the explanation why so many impetuous souls were (and still are) drawn by His popularity to offer their easy allegiance — only to be turned away by His severity — and, yet, so many of the world's own wise have been disappointed by His moral "perfectionism" and found their sentimentalism disillusioned.

Now, just as Christ identified Himself with men in their needs but separated Himself from them in their sins and thus redeemed men, so the Church is to carry on the same kind of existence and task in the world, and is to share the fate and glory of its Lord.

The secular power-politician's way of gaining and expanding his power over men is, first by discovering the things the people are desiring and, then, by exploiting the people in manipulating their desires. He capitalizes upon their desires, fans them up and cools them down in accordance to the necessity of his own strategy, gives beatific promises of abundance under which all shall have their desires satisfied to their hearts' content.

When promises are no longer too easily swallowed and tensions mount, he can always manufacture dummy scapegoats upon which the people's pent-up emotions can be aired and diverted.

Meeting the real needs of men

But the Church, by virtue of its commitment to the power of the Cross which is "weakness" to men, deals with power differently. It puts all desires, wants and slogans in the light of God's judgment and refuses to satisfy, or promise to satisfy, what men desire just because they have desired it, or to exploit them in their yearning for the fulfilment of their desires; because men's desires cannot rise up as high as God expects, and God fulfils men's desires in ways better and higher than what men think themselves. The Church rather chooses to identify itself with men in their real needs and to offer what God sees to be their salvation, (at the same time without ridding them of their freedom to reject it).

This, of course, does not put the Church in a very easy, popular position. The Church *could* enjoy popularity, as it actually did in some disappointing periods of its history, and we always need to be alert and humble to question ourselves if we are in any way making the Church repeat the same story of disappointment. If it were completely to identify itself with the world, the worldly powers would be only too glad because, then, all their hearts' designs could always receive an ecclesiastical sanction and blessing. Or, if the Church were completely to separate itself from the world, e. g., by going into a hermitage and by confining its concerns solely to so-called "spiritual matters", the world would also be overjoyed and would be anxious to respect this transcendental aloofness of the Church because, then, the Church and the world would be "each minding its own business".

But the truly witnessing Church, the Church which is both in the world and not of the world, the Church

which is the sheep in the midst of wolves, is to do neither, or rather to do both, while maintaining its own initiative in saying "yes" to one thing and "no" to another.

Since the Church is both to be in the world and to be not of the world, it must keep its own independence and initiative in saying with its Lord, at one moment, that "all those who are not against us are for us", but, at another moment, that "all who are not for us are against us". There is in the nature of the Church an absolute identification with God and an absolute repudiation of sin that forbids its other identifications and separations to be absolute.

The Christian, therefore, cannot expect to find anywhere in the world such a moral atmosphere as he can feel at home in. He is perpetually a stranger, engaged in a perpetual revolt against the human world as it is. To suffer is a rule in his life rather than an exception.

But this should not be a disturbing thought to the Christian or the Church but rather a reassuring one because the disciples are to "rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the name". In fact, Christ has forewarned us: "Blessed are ye, when men should revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manners of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you." It is rather when the world says good things and sings high praises of the Christians that we shall be in a greater danger and should worry lest the Church should have lost its significance and separateness in the world.

Power of a different order

The world, of course, has its own standards of power. The moment the Church takes upon itself the world's standards, it loses its initiative and puts itself on the defensive and becomes defeatist in spirit. It has nothing left but its weakness and smallness and powerlessness and, of all things in the world, it would be the most

miserable because it still makes claims that sound now fantastic. In so doing, instead of judging the world, the Church is being judged by the world. But the Church is meant to judge the world. The only way it can do so is by the power of God. "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." The power as man knows it and craves for it is denied by the Cross because the Cross is Power itself, the Power of an entirely different order.

During the days of the Japanese military occupation of East China, all common sense certainly told the Christians that the Church was terribly "weak" and had no way to survive the war. All human wisdom and power-politics certainly tried to guide the Church to the path of despair and opportunism and unbelief. All desires to maintain the physical buildings of the Church were certainly temptations to sell the Church's soul. The path between identification and separation was certainly a very narrow and clear one. But the human desire to avoid suffering confused moral issues and created the illusion of a wide and pliant path.

At a meeting of Christian representatives called by the military authorities in Shanghai early in 1942, a Chinese pastor was called upon to open the meeting with a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the victory of the Japanese Imperial Army. This was not just a test of the Chinese Church's patriotism, but more fundamentally one of its character as Church, of its real identification and separation.

The pastor stood up and offered a prayer for peace instead. And let us remember that in those days to advocate peace was treason itself. That prayer told us that the Church has a resource of power of its own which the world did not understand. It meant that the Church refused to accept the pity the world had for its weakness and turned the world back with all its wisdom and its expediency. It meant the Church's call to its people to abandon the only power which common sense knows but

to rely on the power of God — a call to “lift the drooping hands and strengthen the weak knees, and make straight the paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed”. It was a declaration that identification had a limit and that that limit had been reached and that the time had come for nothing but to say: “Here stand I, I can no other”.

The result is not just the Church’s survival of its travail, but the revival of its brightness and glory. In denying the powers that flash across the pages of history, the Church rediscovers the eternally renewing Power of God which clothes itself in the form of human weakness: He came as a helpless baby and the world got rid of Him as a silent criminal.

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

The Christian as Revolutionary

JACQUES ELLUL

It is surely unnecessary to insist on the necessity of revolution, for our Western civilisation has reached a mortal impasse. Misfortune in all its forms has descended as never before upon the whole earth ; total warfare, dictatorial empires, organised famine, moral disintegration of the social framework (of the family and the nation), and of the moral framework (individual amorality), the fabulous acquisition of wealth which is powerless to benefit man, the almost complete enslavement of mankind either to the state or to an individual (capitalism), and finally the depersonalization of man himself.

This is all obvious, and man now feels the lack of both security and of hope. He demands a change. But with every advance that is made, the more does the insufficiency of human solutions become evident and the more convinced are we that we are unable to control the world which has escaped from our hands.

When we look thus at the disorder of the world, at the insufficiency of remedies and the necessity of improvement, we are ready to admit that this world is apocalyptic. I mean that it is apocalyptic because we, who are Christians, can only see it in the perspective of judgment and pardon ; but it is not the less so because all our contemporaries are conscious of the necessity of revolution.

The impossibility of revolution

However, in spite of the conviction that we live in a revolutionary epoch we must admit that our epoch is also completely immobile. Beyond the chaos, beyond the

violence, the technical progress and the social and political experiments, the structures of our world stand firmly fixed and develop according to the least revolutionary logic. It is a fact that the decisive values of our modern civilisation are, primarily, production, the constant increase of the powers of the state and the formation of the nation-state, the total autonomy of technology far more than the form of ownership of the means of production, or any of the political theories, whether democratic or totalitarian. These fundamental values are never questioned and the whole evolution of our society tends to strengthen them. Conservatives and revolutionaries, democrats and totalitarians, liberals and socialists are all equally committed to these values, and the universal catastrophes of the present day are not the result of change, but the inevitable outcome of these structures of our civilisation. It is therefore useless to look for a remedy without modifying the structures. Besides they claim the loyalty of all, whether consciously or — and this is more serious — without being understood in their real nature. And so revolution comes to be understood, according to the new concept which marxism provides, no longer as the reversal of the logical course of history, but rather as the acceleration of that logical course. Revolution, so far as we can see it, means a continual strengthening of the powers of the state, the growing subordination of man to his economic function, the more complete merging of the person in the mass.

If we proceed a little further we must even admit that any kind of revolution is impossible today, if it depends for success upon the use of the characteristic means of the structures of our civilisation. In order to liberate mankind the support of many is required, methods of modern propaganda must be used, mass politics which alone are capable of success; that is to say a clear understanding must be acquired of the structures against which the struggle is set. Here lies the whole drama of communism and fascism, which show

themselves to be incapable of producing an authentic revolution in our civilisation because they adopt its essential points and limit themselves to speeding up its internal development. All the revolutions planned by communists or fascists are mere superficial modifications, which bring no real solution to the problems of our day. To the exasperated longing for revolution felt in our epoch there stands opposed a deep-rooted immobility, a complete incapacity for revolution.

There are indeed conflicts in our society, but they are illusory. Those who fight do so for illusions and sacrifice themselves for false reasons. The political conflicts of today are not revolutionary, they are merely persons or teams in opposition to one another. The means are discussed but the ends never questioned; powers are set up against each other, but not conceptions of the world. The communist society rests upon the same essential postulates as capitalist society, and man is no more free on the one side than on the other. Everywhere in the world man is the slave of production, everywhere he is absorbed by the masses, everywhere justice is mocked, everywhere the same financial technique prevails and work is as inhuman in rationalised American factories as in Stakhanovism.

The dominion of facts

If we seek for the motive that leads man today into this state of blindness we cannot but be struck by the domination of our age by "facts". Facts, the accomplished fact, material fact, have become the criterion of truth. We cannot judge facts, it is said, we can only bow before them. Hence, since technology, the state and production are facts, it is our place to worship them and adapt ourselves to them. This is the real religion of the modern world: the cult of the accomplished fact. On this supreme religion depend the lower cults of the dollar, of race and the proletariat which are mere external manifestations of the great modern divinity: "Fact".

If God is no longer real in our day it is because He no longer looks like a fact.

Those who question the value of facts bring on themselves the most cruel reproach of this generation of being retrograde, and those who formulate this reproach do not see that they are attacking the only possible revolutionary attitude today: the revolution against facts.

A terrifying example of this religious authority of facts is the atomic bomb. Man can no longer envisage the possibility of not using the bomb, of rejecting the fact. The bomb is a fact, it must therefore be accepted and henceforward man only thinks of secondary questions: who is to use the bomb? How is it to be controlled? etc. The problem never occurs of deciding if the bomb is a good or an evil, for in our day facts seem to pass beyond good or evil. It is the bomb which asks man questions, not man who asks himself questions, or questions the facts. The bomb dominates man and it is no longer man who uses the bomb. In this way man abdicates from his real superiority and becomes a slave to the facts, in a slavery which passes beyond the dream of any dictator. Further, thought, life, feeling, everything is subjected to the power of experience, to the power of facts.

Resisting the facts

What seems essential to our world is that this subjection to facts is the anti-revolutionary position *par excellence*. Proudhon was a revolutionary in affirming the supremacy of the human will over human conditions, and in calling upon man to fight against his situation. Marx was an anti-revolutionary when he explained that mathematically, and by the evolution of facts and the game of dialectics, the socialist society will emerge from the capitalist society. When socialism becomes scientific, that is to say when it submits to facts, it has turned anti-revolutionary. So when man resists a fact it is

because he has judged that the situation may change and a new state of fact appear. But this is not to assert a truth, it is merely to guess an evolution.

Now at all times in history revolutionary aspirations, as a necessary element in social life, have been the affirmation of a spiritual truth against the error of the moment, the affirmation of the freedom of man against all necessities and all conformities. Revolution is not the logical course of history, it aims rather at modifying it in the name of a freedom and of a truth which go beyond it.

At the present time, for instance, those who believe in political and economic liberalism, in capitalism or in classical democracy, are slaves of the present fact considered independently of its evolution; they are the conformists of the past. Those who believe in socialism (particularly under its extreme form of nazism or communism) believe also in evolution; they are the conformists of the future. That these different doctrines have had such success is because the masses are conformist. The revolutionary position is entirely different. It cannot be merely the affirmation of the truth, or of freedom or of some political doctrine and no more. It must be completely revolutionary. We have to choose today between the civilisation of the masses, technological and conformist, the best of Huxley's worlds, hell organised on earth by the physiological well-being of all, or on the other hand a different civilisation of which we can say nothing because we have still to build it. If we are unable to make the choice, that is to say to choose revolution, and if we allow ourselves to be carried along by history, we shall have chosen without knowing it.

Christ makes us revolutionaries

Now the situation of a Christian in the world is essentially revolutionary. He hopes to preserve the world by preserving in the midst of it an inevitable power of revolution. This, to be sure, has not always

been evident in history and is not always evident today, for Christians seem to be the most conformist of all men and theologians appear to be absolutely anti-revolutionary in teaching respect for authority. Yet this does not mean that the Holy Spirit has ceased to work, or that Christians have ceased to be revolutionaries. We are Christians not because we have chosen Christ, but because Christ has chosen us. We are revolutionaries not because we feel the urgency of revolution, but because Christ makes us revolutionaries. The Christian does not necessarily act in a revolutionary manner. He is in a revolutionary situation, in a state of permanent revolution which may be expressed by a concerted action, but may also continue in a state of ferment and lead on to a gradual deepening, which is just as revolutionary as an explosion. For the Christian also the revolution must be one which affects the whole world and not only the state or the government. His task is not to change a form of state or economy, but more definitely the structures of a civilisation. Such a change will bring in its train governmental modifications as well as economic, but will not necessarily lead to direct conflict with the authorities, unless the latter defend the established disorder and openly reject the will of God.

The Christian belongs to two cities: he lives in a Society, is the citizen of a nation, the member of a family, has a profession like other men, takes his place in the world in solidarity with others and has functions like his neighbour. But he cannot wholly belong to a world which is for him but a "tabernacle" (II Peter 1: 13), in which he is "but a stranger and pilgrim" (Hebr. 11: 13) for he belongs to another city and owns another Lord. His thought and his acts have their criterion in another world. He is the subject of another state and its ambassador on earth (II Cor. 5: 20). He is in the world to defend the interests of his Lord. He is preparing the victory of his Lord by speaking, by spying, and by creating cells. Since the two cities in which he lives can never coincide he always carries a contradiction in his

own heart. He must accept the tension and the opposition as characteristic of his position, since there is a final dualism between the world and the Kingdom of God. He must suffer, since knowing himself to be on the right side he can never resign himself gladly to the destruction of others whom he sees in the power of tyranny, of excessive toil, or of vain experiments. So he must plunge into social and political problems, not to make a paradise of this world, but to make it tolerable ; to diminish, not the opposition of this world to the Kingdom of God, but the opposition between the disorder of the world and the order which God wills for it ; not to establish the Kingdom of God, but to give the Gospel a chance to be preached so that all men may listen to the good news of Jesus Christ.

The Christian will go on working so that the order intended by God shall be embodied in visible and definite institutions, but institutions which always remain open, that is to say which do not pretend to be a whole or an absolute, which excludes the presence of God. All economic or political solutions must be temporary. The Christian will never believe in their perfection, nor in their continuance, because they remain vitiated by the sin in which they are realised, and by this very fact the Christian must remain in a permanent revolutionary situation. Even when the institutions, laws and reforms which he planned are realised, he continues in the opposition. He always demands more, for the demands of God are inexhaustible. He goes on questioning what man calls progress, discovery, result, fact. If he does not do this, it means that in some degree he has betrayed his vocation.

The Christian perspective in the Second Coming

For the Christian there is a still more significant fact, namely the promise of the glorious return of Jesus Christ. The Christian is essentially a man who lives in the expectation of this return, of judgment and of the establishment of the Kingdom. He is a man who

lives in the future, not in a temporal or logical future, but in a future which will break with the present world. The day to day events of the world take on a meaning only in the perspective of the Kingdom of God which is to come. Only the imminence of the return of Christ can give them an authentic seriousness, can indeed give them their true meaning. Outside this perspective history is a mere explosion of madness.

Now the function of the Christian in this matter is to reveal by action and thought in the present world that this event is still to come. He has a prophet's function to fulfil, and, just as in the case of the prophets of Israel, this function gives him a revolutionary authenticity, for he does not stop at proclaiming a far-off event, he lives it here and now and gives it reality for all who are about him. He is a revolutionary because he passes judgment on everything that happens today in the name of a truth which is not yet here, but which is to come, and which he holds as more authentic and more real than the reality about him. He brings the future into the present like an explosive power. He believes that future events have greater importance and greater truth than present events, and his revolutionary act creates history in orientating it towards that future. All known revolutions have shown the same characteristics, and this would be true of communism also, had not communism destroyed its own revolutionary power by the substitution of evolution. The Christian does not think of evolution. He judges history in the light of the fact which lies beyond history, knowing that its intervention is able to overturn the social and political structures in which our civilisation is nearing its end.

There are no Christian principles

The first consequence of this situation in which the Christian finds himself is that he cannot judge or act according to principles. He is the opposite of the moralist: there are no Christian principles, there is the person of Jesus Christ Who is the principle of all things, but

Jesus Christ cannot be reduced, although Christianity has often tried to do it, to a certain number of principles whose consequences are logically deducible. This transformation of the living God into a philosophical doctrine is the constant temptation of the theologian. The Christian life is not the application of an ethic, a law or a code. It proceeds towards an end. What is true on the personal plane is also true on the social plane. There are no Christian political and social principles. In the Scriptures God does not reveal to us a doctrine of principles, but a judgment and an activity which tend towards the accomplishment of the work of God. In biblical history there is no logical or causal development. No permanent static order is established, but the activity of God appears like a presence, like a movement which is constantly overturning history, constantly using the works of men in the direction of the promised kingdom. From the revelation in history of that activity it is possible by analogy to lay down lines for organising our activity, for building a temporary but mobile order, but not a political system or principles. But in his revolutionary attempts the Christian must not show signs of any dogmatism, he must be open to all human activity and he may not brush aside any political or social experiment by virtue of so-called Christian principles. He can only apply the rule of Ecclesiastes: "To everything there is a season... He hath made everything beautiful in its time."

There is therefore no Christian attitude which is valid for all circumstances and all times, rather, apparently contradictory attitudes may at different times be equally good, in so far as they record in history fidelity to the designs of God. The Christian may at one time belong to the Right or again to the Left, he may cease to be a liberal and become a socialist, or the reverse, according to whichever position seems at the moment to him to be most in line with the Will of God, but he will take up every position in the perspective of the return of Jesus Christ and of His judgment. This indeed is a

difficult and dangerous attitude, but we have never received a promise that the Christian life would be easy and secure. Almost all "Christian" political systems have been catastrophes, that of the Jesuits no less than that of Constantine. That is because they almost all conceived of judgment on the basis of a moral doctrine and not of the Kingdom of the Living God. They tried to build a political theory taken from the Gospels. There are only three criteria by which the Christian can decide as to the goodness or badness of any act, namely the significance of that act in the perspective of the Kingdom, its conformity to the whole activity of God in bringing in His Kingdom and the possible value of the act for the glory of God. It is only as he continually applies these three criteria to social facts that the Christian can be a revolutionary by bringing nearer the Kingdom of God.

The realism of the Lordship of Christ

It is easy to see in what ways this point of view goes further than the prevailing idealisms, no less than the realisms. The constant presence of the Kingdom lays an obligation upon us always to go further on, always to make greater claims while at the same time preserving jealously all positive realisations, however humble. In his realism the Christian does not consider effectiveness or success, but only the Lordship of Christ. He also judges all things (I Thess. 5 : 21), but not according to human rules. His realism does not stop at daily facts. He makes clear judgments on the deep-seated structures which condition our civilisation and keep revolution at bay. He goes far further than the licensed revolutionaries of the political parties who only seek to establish a world that is too well-known and is already out of date. This presumes in the first place a long study of the world in which we live and which we know so badly ; and then the search for ways of life which allow of an escape from the weight of these structures. No

result can be obtained by a direct attack upon them, or by an attempt to modify them in a spectacular way, with the object of rebuilding a world from the foundations. The only effective way of escaping them is to contrive to live on the verge of this totalitarian society, not to be content with rejecting it, but rather to criticise it through and through. It may be that in communities which admit this manner of life new forms of civilisation may unfold. It is not our task today to be preoccupied with this possibility, or to dream of golden perspectives. The first step is to be aware of our world and take our place in a revolutionary situation. Until this first step has been taken everything else is but utopia, and it is in vain that we Christians busy ourselves with social or political questions. Perhaps this step seems to be an operation on a mere intellectual or spiritual level; none the less it is a difficult decision to break with the lines of the present day. Are Christians brave enough to risk everything in this accomplishment of their vocation?

Let us remind ourselves of the disgraceful decadence of Rome in the fourth century. Upon a world which was already dead, decadent and immoral came the barbarian attack, which destroyed that world and succeeded, not in establishing a better world, but in rebuilding slowly an original civilisation. The tragedy of the present world is that there are no more possible barbarians, or rather the only possible barbarian is the Christian. He alone, because he depends upon his Lord, may be without the principles, the rules, the way of life shared by everyone else. He alone today may destroy civilisation in order to substitute a new civilisation. On him alone today depends the only conceivable revolution.

The Dilemma of a Christian

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM

WILLIAM S. ELLIS

Dear Robert,

Last December I was asked to write an article for *The Student World* on *The Christian and Violence*, with reference to the dilemma which confronts us, namely that we are called to obey Jesus Christ, the God of Love, in a realm where violence is law. The events of the last few months have prevented the completion of this article. Paradoxically, during the same time I encountered concretely in the student world the very dilemma of which I now have no time to write. I resigned as American Vice-President of the International Union of Students. This was the last act of an experience which abounded in power-politics and presented only too clearly the horns of the dilemma. I wish to inform you of this experience in power-politics in relation to the events which led up to my resignation.

My Convictions

When I returned to Europe in January 1947, I had begun to realise fully the role of covert and overt power in national and international politics. Three important experiences confirmed this view. Firstly, I had attended the World Student Congress in Prague in 1946. Secondly, I had been briefed by a friend in Paris on what part the communists had played in the Congress and what to expect in the future. Thirdly, I read Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. It was the impact of these

events which convinced me that, in dealing with the communists in the I.U.S., the protection of the vital interests of students — such as relief — would lie in the strategic use of power. Due to a lack of the indigenous, cohesive forces present in a nation, this power internationally would be more nakedly revealed.

My other convictions were the desirability of an International Union of Students and of cooperation with progressive student movements, which were interested in the student's welfare and his contribution to peace. I believed there was a place for a world student organisation which united all, except fascist, students. Its primary purpose would be to concentrate on student affairs, while never hesitating to proclaim its political beliefs or to fight for students deprived of their due academic and democratic rights. Concerning the politics of such an organisation, I realised I would probably be to the right of the students I encountered. However, if a situation could be explained in terms of my beliefs, I was willing to support a political protest and explain my actions to American students. There were certain democratic traditions and rights which I would, and could, not compromise.

My last conviction was the necessity of making a Christian witness. This was to be done by attempting to bring the word of God to bear on each situation and by interpreting the final act and its consequences in the light of my faith. I was determined to become a part of the I.U.S. through my work, and yet try to see the organisation from the detached view acquired by faith. I had also hoped to take my stand in terms of issues, not blocs. All this I had hoped to do.

As I remember all this, I think I erred in not considering seriously enough the interplay of these convictions. I believed in the necessity of power in group relations, though my inability to see any substitute or remedy left me gloomy and pessimistic. I believed in the love of God as revealed through Jesus Christ. I believed in the priesthood of believers and thus in the

dignity of the individual and his right to free speech, etc. I believed in the rights, duties, and interest of the students of the world. I believed in the rightness of much of the self-interest of American students. Yet, how were the love of Christ and the violence of power, or the interests of students in general and of American students in particular, to coincide or come to a compromise? These were the dilemmas I encountered.

The only conviction which apparently presented no dilemma was my determination to be honest with myself and the I.U.S. Thus, I was the most severe critic of I.U.S. "its loyal opposition". Yet, even here the memory of Nietzsche's hidden lie presents itself. Perhaps, the only truth was that these dilemmas internally tore one to bits and left one limp and exhausted.

The qualifying factors

Power, if not an inevitable factor in I.U.S., would have been made so by the very nature of communism. Marx exposed the cloaks of pretension which always hide the self-interest, self-pride, and will-to-power of the dominant classes. He showed the rationalistic uses made of reason by the same classes. However, the communist has taken this valued and admitted insight and turned it into a half-lie by using it against all groups but his own. Also, in his materialism the communist is unable to acquire the transcendent view by which he may criticise himself, recognise his own contingency and finiteness, and the inevitable inadequacy of his philosophy. These characteristics have led among communists to a self-righteousness which is an excellent motivation for their tactics and politics.

The communist student in his self-righteousness is both dogmatic and expedient. Everyone who does not agree with him is an imperialist or a fascist. He must attack his opponents. Only Russia, communists, and colonial peoples are ever right. As for expediency, a good example is the extraordinary use the I.U.S. has

made of the term "democracy". To the West, it has meant their most cherished traditions. In the I.U.S. the term meant only anti-fascism and dictatorship of the proletariat. The confusion surrounding "democracy" was, in my opinion, deliberately fostered and extremely effective in beguiling the West.

Power and politics in the I.U.S. were qualified and affected by the tactics of the Communist Party. The basic situation was the control by the communists. The tactics often changed and qualified political actions and protests, but they never altered the situation. Since August 1946, there have been three general phases of tactics. The I.U.S. was established during the aftermath of the wartime unity when the front organisations and cooperation with all leftist groups were welcome. Then, a communist said, "We must have unity". He was even willing to make little sacrifices for this unity. Zhdanov's speech in Warsaw in August 1947 marked the commencement of the second phase in tactics characterised by militancy. A communist said then, "We must be true to our principles". The concessions recently won by Carey of the C.I.O. and Deaking of the British Trade Unions from the Executive Committee of the World Federation of Trade Unions mark, in my opinion, the third and present phase. Now communists will cooperate with all leftist groups for the purpose of stopping the solidification of resistance against them. When, and if, the Party wins new offensive positions, it will change its tactics again. The I.U.S. must be considered against the background of these tactics.

The communists did not introduce power and politics into the I.U.S., but simply overemphasised and exploited them whenever possible. Thus, they were a qualifying factor of the basic situation dominated by power. As a minority they would have made excellent gadflies; but as a self-righteous majority they gradually and inevitably became intolerable. In the end, I realised force had to be used to hold them, for this only did they understand.

Issues and Tactics

To prove the above points, I shall give three examples of issues and tactics. In brief, power in the I.U.S. resided mostly in the communists' control of the Secretariat and the Executive Committee; the maintenance of power in democratic procedure, as long as this was expedient and meant only rule by the majority.

1. One learned immediately that no delegate in an Executive Committee meeting would or could sacrifice the self-interests of his organisation. Each was jealous of his autonomy and prestige. Since there was no higher coercive power than the national union, the strongest — after paying obeisance to democracy — usually won the issues. For instance, when M. Trouvatt of France and Mr. Sadar of the All-Indian Student Federation argued over a resolution favouring the students of Viet-Nam, the former could not approve the resolution until considerably changed. He dared not take back to France the original resolution which infringed too greatly on his country's prestige and politics. As it was, the French National Union rejected the final resolution.

2. The Communists — especially the Russians — were so adept at tactics they made the Greek Government of early 1947 democratic. At the Executive meeting in May 1947 the Russian delegate expressed a preference for a place on the Greek rather than the German Commission. The Committee informed him a Russian delegate could be on both commissions. However, when discussion began on the Greek Commission, Mr. Vasquez of Cuba maintained that since England, Russia and U.S.A. were directly involved in Greece, a commission of small nations would be more effective and objective. The Russian delegates, very strongly desiring a place on this Commission, objected.

Mr. Sheleppin of Russia spoke as follows, "I do not understand Vasquez' reversal of his stand of this morning.

Did not Vasquez agree that Russia could go on the Greek Commission? Yes, of course. Russia is democratic. Why can't one democratic country go to another democratic country? Also, it is not the right of the commission to interfere in internal affairs, simply students' affairs. Why, therefore, try to stop Russian students from going, students from democratic Russia to democratic Greece? There is nothing secret in Greece. Truman's speech only deals with giving a loan."

Vasquez replied. Then Mr. Shevstov of the Ukraine spoke: "Vasquez says he can't tell whether the Greek Government is democratic or not. Yet he says the Greek Government will not grant visas to democratic countries. Then Vasquez speaks of small countries whose interests in Greece do not clash. Well, Russia does not have forces or troops in Greece. We have no interest there. Therefore, the Soviet Union has equal rights with a country like Norway."

When this argument was finished, I stated my agreement with Vasquez and belief that the Greek Government's treatment of students in March 1947 was very harsh and undemocratic. There was a slight embarrassment, for the positions of the American and Russian delegates were seemingly reversed. During the intermission, the words of the Russians were pointedly regarded as a big joke. I was rather disgusted with the hypocrisy.

3. Sometimes I had to fight to have the Constitution upheld. The Constitution states that each Council's agenda shall contain provision for the election of new officers. Despite these specific instructions, I had to argue with the Russians rather strongly and almost insultingly in order to have elections added to the agenda. That evening I was told this entire incident was due to mistranslation. Why this mistake was never corrected at the time was never explained.

In August, militancy became the order of the day. Though very sick, I saw the implications of the new tactics and was fearful for the I.U.S. Cooperation in

the period of "unity" had been difficult enough. With the communists militant, I saw little hope of further cooperation. Gradually the crisis approached. I was informed by my proxy, Jim Smith, that the Executive Committee had been very aggressive at its January 1948 meeting. Grohman's speech had divided the world into the democratic and imperialist camps and had placed the I.U.S. with the former. One point after another showed I.U.S. was becoming more political and following the Party line. Cooperation with communist World Federation of Democratic Youth was continually stressed. After studying this trend carefully, I informed the U.S.A. that a crisis was fast approaching at either the Executive meeting in April or the Summer Council meeting. This advice was unnecessary.

The crisis came in March 1948 when the Communist Party took over Czechoslovakia. The Action Committees seized the Prague, and National, Unions of Students. Professors and students were expelled from the University allegedly on the charge of collaboration. The democratic and academic rights of students were openly violated. With supreme smugness, the Secretariat refused to condemn the violations but instead justified them with technical and legal arguments. Disgusted and weary, I resigned. I knew American students would never agree to the Secretariat's non-action, and I.U.S. — after this act — could never become a representative world student organisation. The bubble had burst.

Reactions and Solutions

My personal reactions during this period were highly complicated. I was not unhappy. I enjoyed all of the work and even the arguments. Yet this mood was superficial. At all times, I knew a most profound and tiring loneliness. I had many good and sincere friends. Still, I was always conscious of a spiritual loneliness and isolation from which I could not free myself. For instance, when I wanted to speak frankly to, or ask advice

of, someone who might understand my views, something would interfere. Either the person was wary of me, or I of him, or some person whom I did not trust was present. Often, whenever a conversation began, it was a justification of Marx, the I.U.S., or the Party. I would often feel under pressure and assert myself. This tension and loneliness drew the warp and woof of life very taut.

I experienced a continual anxiety. Whether this was the psychological condition which precedes sin, a realisation of my limitations, or my attempts at creativity, is difficult to say. Probably, it was all three. My spiritual and ideological loneliness, and thus conspicuousness, demanded a higher standard of conduct than ever before. The possibility of creating something which might aid students and contribute a little to a world of peace was a continual reminder of my limitations. This condition is, of course, a normal one, but it was heightened by the challenge of Prague.

The greatest source of anxiety was the dilemma presented by the necessity of the violence of power and the love of Christ in the same world. There was the steady pull from both sides. This dilemma — I gradually realised — presented to me the greatest source of either contamination or failure. If the influence of my faith became too great, I was liable to a lack of reality and a grave error in judgment. If the fascination of power in itself grew on me, I was guilty of grave sin.

The solutions to the dilemma lay in either the coincidence or the balancing of the forces. In this "historio-economic" world it is not impossible that the interests of American students should be those of the world's students, or that power, being used against what I thought was evil, should have a divine aspect. I say this is possible. Yet it is highly improbable, and it is the fault into which all groups of men — philosophers, statesmen, kings, parties — have fallen. There is always the conscious and unconscious desire to justify the particular by identifying it with a universal value. I was aware of this

pitfall and tried to avoid it and its hypocritical accompaniments.

The second solution involved some suitable balance of the dilemma's forces. My faith had to be strengthened; the influence of my power lessened. On the one hand, my faith was susceptible to disintegration because of loneliness and possible self-pity. My lack of contact with the Church, when I first arrived in Prague, could, and did, prevent the reaffirmation of my faith. On the other hand, the influence of power grew on me. The idea of power as a solution to all problems in life presented itself. There was also the temptation to flaunt my power. Once in Rome — I was ill at the time — a student continually doubted my word. To convince him, I showed some of the power at my disposal. At that moment of weariness and high fever when my will power was low, I took the easiest solution to my problem.

A very good friend gave me the remedy for balancing these two forces. He told me my attitude toward my faith must radically change. At home, I had always assumed the S.C.M. and the Church. If I missed Church on Sunday, I still lived in an atmosphere conducive to my beliefs. In Prague, I could not assume this at all. I had to go to Church every Sunday and read the Bible every morning. My friend reiterated that this was absolutely necessary to re-affirm and strengthen my faith under pressure. I took this advice and gradually learned the truth of my friend's words. In worship, I found by degrees the peace, relaxation and fellowship which I so sorely wanted. This advice took care of one of the forces.

In the same faith I found the best check to the other force, power. In opposition to the smugness and self-righteousness of the communist, I had to counter with the Christian's "uneasy conscience", which time and again carefully analysed the course of events. Had I been right? Had I been just? Had I been guilty of sin? This self-introspection could be a handicap and

could result in non-action at times. Yet I think its main function was to temper the extravagant use, and the personal contaminating effect, of power.

The only solution I found which worked was the love of God as revealed in Christ. I know no better one today.

Conclusion

I believe that if Christians in groups are to work effectively in the world, they have no alternative but to use power against the forces they consider evil. Our loyalties are to the Lord Jesus Christ, our conviction that in the harmony of His love we can find true peace and everlasting life. Yet as long as men sin in trying to become god, and work amidst the relativities of this "historio-economic" world, we must use force in group relations. If this is our policy, the "Children of Light" will present a far more effective front to the "Children of Darkness".

The dangers of sin in this policy are so varied and complicated that the Christian must — before and during action — turn to God and ask forgiveness for his sins. He must ask that through the power of the Almighty he will see his own mortality and finiteness. In this realisation, he will temper the evil tendencies of his power, and judge with justice. When the action has ceased, he must again turn to God and ask forgiveness for his pride, for he has not emerged unscathed.

Closing with best wishes,

Sincerely,
WILLIAM S. ELLIS.

P. S. — I hope, Robert, the end does not sound like a mathematical formula. Certainly life in Prague was everything but that. A better picture would be my slipping into practically all the pitfalls and climbing out, muttering to myself and brushing the mud off my clothes. That picture is more human and true.

BILL.

The Political Position of Jacques Maritain, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner

JACQUES DE SENARCLENS

Maritain

There are numerous works of Maritain which are either wholly or in part devoted to political problems, but we shall confine our attention in this article to the three which seem most clearly to contain the essentials of his position. In 1940 a small book appeared with the title *De la Justice Politique* (Plon, ed. Présences), in which the author, beginning with the horrors of the war, condemns "the mischief done by so-called realist politics *divorced* from the inflexible laws of justice and of love", and calls for a real renewal, a moral revolution which "would discover in thought and action the intrinsically ethical character of politics" (p. 45). In *Christianisme et Démocratie* (Editions de la Maison Française, New York, 1943) he returns to this subject with its present relevance and argues that the sufferings of the present time demand the birth of a new world in which politics in particular shall rest on justice. In the last chapter of *Principes d'une Politique Humaniste* (do. 1944) which is entitled *The End of Machiavellism* he affirms: "The State and politics, once they are truly divorced from ethics, are a kingdom of these demonic principalities of which St. Paul spoke" (p. 196). They must therefore be opposed by a "Christian politics" (p. 207) which is at any rate in the end more successful. "For in the existential context of human life politics, belonging as it does by its very essence to the kingdom of ethics, requires in consequence to be aided and strengthened... by all that man receives in his social life from the Word of God working within him" (p. 207).

To the question whether justice and politics can dwell together Maritain makes the answer in the former work that to divorce them is to make for war, whereas only political justice can bring to the peoples of the world peace, freedom and happiness (p. 114). In answer to Machiavelli he sets the pronouncement of the Pope who "recently uttered the most solemn caution that if politics are not to turn to disaster they must be regulated according to the morality of the Gospel" (p. 91).

Now true politics are an alliance of justice and love: "The Christian political faith is neither theocentric nor clerical, nor is it a pseudo-evangelical political faith of weakness and non-resistance to evil; it is a faith which is authentically political, which knows where it stands in the order of nature and the natural virtues, and works in that order armed with concrete and real justice, with force and perspicacity and prudence, and with the sword which is the attribute of the state; but knowing at the same time that peace is the work not only of justice but of love, and that love is also an essential part of political virtue" (*Principes*, p. 209).

These principles, according to Maritain, can only be applied in a democracy rightly understood. True democracy depends on the Gospel (*Christianisme et Démocratie*, p. 35); "The philosophy of St. Thomas was the first authentic philosophy of democracy" (*Principes*, p. 49); if modern democracies are bankrupt it is because they have denied Christianity (*Christianisme et Démocratie*, p. 25). The true essence of democracy is yet to be rediscovered since "the democratic ideal is the profane name for the ideal of Christianity" (do. p. 60). Human dignity, freedom and right are the products of Christianity; and a truly human democracy will therefore be a Christian democracy. Over against communism which is the last stage on the way to the emancipation of man, but which is bound up with atheism (pp. 77-78) must be set an "organic" democracy which aims at the expansion of human personality (*Principes*, pp. 59-60). And the author calls for an effort at purification (*Christianisme et Démocratie*, pp. 66-67), to lead to the birth of a new civilisation. "The war will only really be won when the first blue prints of a new world that is spiritual and social shall appear in history" (do p. 85).

Barth

The position of Karl Barth is different. Its basis is to be found in an address given in Germany under the title, *Communauté chrétienne et communauté civile* (Roulet, Geneva, 1947). The author begins by making a clear distinction between the domain of the Church and that of the State, so as to avoid any confusion which might end sooner or later either in the absorption of the Church in society, or in the *corpus christianum* of the Middle Ages, which really meant the strangle-hold of the Church upon the world. The terms "Christian politics", "Christian political party", "Christian state" show this final confusion.

And yet this distinction is by no means to be taken to mean that Christians may keep aloof from politics; quite the contrary for the following reasons. In the first place, whether they like it or not, Christians are part of the civil community which embraces all men. Further the Church cannot withdraw from the world; it must evangelise all mankind and it knows that the conditions in which mankind lives have an important bearing on the accomplishment of its mission. It is in order to reach men that the Church must be preoccupied with the prevailing social and political situation and must pray for governments. The Church knows only too well that without a political order there would be no social order (p. 15). Finally, God has willed that a certain order should reign in the world and that "*independently* of the Christianity or the non-Christianity of its representatives and officials" (pp. 15-16). "The aim of the civil community is to protect man against the irruption of chaos and also to give him time, time for the Gospel, for repentance and for faith" (p. 16).

In other words the civil community is also subject to the reign of Jesus Christ and is of great importance in the plan of God; in consequence of this the Church, far from turning aside from the community, has been given the task of acting within it. In this sense, "The existence of the Christian community is in the highest degree political" (p. 12). "The Church cannot at any moment show itself indifferent and neutral with regard to an institution (the State) which is so clearly bound up with its own mission" (p. 18).

How then is the Church to exercise its influence? Not by taking the place of the State, by dominating or trying to "Christianise" it, nor indeed by proposing, or even imposing, a political doctrine which would be the only Christian doctrine (p. 23), but much more simply, in answer to every political idea by expressing its own hopes and also its questions. Thus starting from the revelation of God and from its faith it will take part in the search for the best form of State. "It is thus being very careful to avoid expressing one *single* political idea — even were it the democratic idea — as to the *Christian system* to the exclusion of all others" (p. 24). There is no Christian economics, there is no Christian medicine, etc., there is nothing but the influence of the Word of God on economics, the State, politics, medicine, etc., for the products of human intelligence are not to be confounded with the Kingdom of God. It is by preserving this freedom with regard to all systems that Christians will accept their co-responsibility in politics and will serve the civil community by their discernment, their judgments, their choices and decisions and their devotion, being further prepared, if necessary, to accept and to endure many other things (p. 26).

In this way, according to Barth, the Church must not attach itself to one system or another as has happened today in certain countries, but while remaining free must intervene in all systems in the name of its Lord Who is also the Lord of the whole of reality. This is the reason for Barth's condemnation of Christian political parties (p. 58 ff.). For this reason too the Church is all the more seriously committed (pp. 26-27).

The Church will thus intervene, not in the name of natural law (p. 28 ff.), nor to defend its own cause (p. 31 ff.), but only to raise the voice of the righteousness and the Will of God which are the foundations of human justice (see *Rechtfertigung und Recht*, ed. *der Theolog. Studien*). "Among the different political possibilities of today Christians will know how to make their way and to choose those whose realisation seems to them clearly to be an analogy or a reflection of the contents of their faith and of their message" (pp. 39-40). In this sense their interventions will be at the same time a testimony and a confession of faith. Examples of this position may be found on pages 41-53, showing

that to pass from one domain to the other demands a deep spiritual and prophetic understanding of Christian truth.

So when it "enters into the sphere of politics" the Church does not leave its own ground; rather it preaches the Gospel and, by analogy with the great Christian teachings, it points the State in the direction in which it must go. It is true that this direction leads towards democracy, but that without the forming of a Christian system.

It is in this subjection to the Word of God and by preserving his freedom with regard to political systems that Barth has, as is well known, made his prophetic interventions in the politics of today. His letters to the Czechs, to the French, to the Dutch, to the British, his interventions in Switzerland (see *Une Voix suisse*, Labor et Fides, Geneva), and in Germany, his violence against national socialism and his patience — which is not unlimited — with regard to communism, all illustrate his position as a man at the same time free and committed, since he is subject to the one Lord of the Church. No man better than he — though he may say less about it than others do — can take to himself this maxim: "Indifference in politics is incompatible with the Christian faith".

Brunner

Like the two before-mentioned writers Brunner insists on the Church's responsibility with regard to the world. The Church is the "conscience of the nations" and that for three main reasons: God has revealed to it what true human life is, the nature, origin and dignity of personality and the human community, true personalism and true communalism. By the criterion of this revelation the Church can distinguish between good and evil in society, but all judgment will first fall back upon the Church itself since it should be an example to the world.

If the Church's duty is to speak and to act, Brunner indicates that its words will not in general be very different from those of others. What is therefore of the first importance is that the Church should prove faithful and that it should radiate throughout society by its example. There can never be a Christian State, or a Christian international order, but wherever the Church

is it can spread abroad a spirit of brotherhood and of love which may become a great power of transformation in the affairs of society. All proclamations or social activities, necessary though they be, are without value unless they have this radiance.

This attitude has been summed up for the preparation of the Amsterdam Conference and the following two main points appear :

1. The Church, the brotherhood of Christians, must spread abroad the spirit of the Gospel and show the world the example of love. In this way it will change men and through them change institutions also.

2. In his work *Gerechtigkeit* Brunner shows that if the Church is to be built on the revelation of God in its messages to the world, it can and must equally use natural truths with a view to better political and social order.

This position seems to us to be half way between that of Maritain whose tendency is to "Christianise" the world by offering Christian solutions, and that of Barth who will only permit the Church to offer civilised society guiding lines, criticisms, directions, in short a general point of departure from revelation to orientate the decisions and actions of non-Christians themselves. Although opposed to the idea of a Christian politics, Brunner would be tempted to provide society, thanks to the assumption of natural law which is contained in his thought, with complete solutions which in spite of their relativity might readily appear to be "Christian systems". In fact Brunner occupies a middle position between the other two writers in working for the coming of a social order, which is founded on "transcendence", which is progressive and which respects the dignity of man.

THE EDITOR'S TRAVEL DIARY

The train for Germany stood diffidently on one side in the Swiss station at Basle. We climbed into it at midnight, spying out our reserved seats in the unlit carriage with a flashlight, and settled down uneasily for the few minutes' ride to the German station. There we joined an unruly queue through the customs, and waited while returning residents unpacked their humble acquisitions. At this point the distinction between an "allied" and a "neutral" passport cropped up, which was to have amusing consequences all the way. All that happened this time was that my colleague shot through the formalities, while I was left to the bored administrations of a specially summoned French official. Then came our first hurdle in the shape of a wicket gate with a German ticket collector in charge and, in spite of all previous adjurations, we lost our nerve and bought two totally unnecessary tickets to Karlsruhe, in order to go through demurely as citizens instead of proudly as superior beings. A few minutes later at the first stop in Germany we were leaning out of the window to catch the attention of the lady of the Railway Mission, who had braved a cold drizzle at one in the morning to let us have tickets to Berlin and pocket money from the German Movement. It was their wish that, so far as possible, we should be their guests, as in every real sense we were in spite of the crudities of occupation.

April fools !

At Frankfurt the next morning our first steps in modern German travel for beginners were guided by Marie Schnieders, formerly of the W.S.R. staff and now on the education side of the American administration. Attempts to regularise our travel plans, including a friendly conversation in his dining-room with the wrong Russian official, took up much time with no visible result, and so we settled down in comfortable chairs in a hotel to which we very obviously did not belong, and made up for a broken night until our train should

come. It turned out to be the French train on which we had been able to book sleepers in Geneva, and so inadvertently we stumbled into history. For, early in the morning of the first of April, we passed Helmstedt at the end of the British zone and drew up at Marienborn at the beginning of the Russian zone. Here we found a strange medley of international and inter-zonal trains held up in the sidings, with the engines blowing off steam in exasperation, while a round in the game of power-politics was played. The American trains had withdrawn with dignity to Frankfurt and Berlin, the British trains had settled down for a siege and were sharing rations and petrol cans of tea with one another. But the frontier was closed to any train which would not submit to Russian inspection. The French train was accommodating, and allowed Russian officers and officials to pass along its corridors. Alas, we had no French papers, and no Russian translation of our permits, and so the axe fell upon us. The young Russian officer was grieved and courteous; the French officer was deeply distressed at having to evict a lady, and a French-speaking lady at that! But nothing could be done and we stepped down on to the tracks, a little disconsolate but glad there were two of us. And so we made history — or at least my companion did — for I appeared in the papers as one Briton, but she, with the indomitable qualities of her race, was transformed into six Swiss!

We hung about the station for some hours, perched furtively upon a luggage barrow, eating our lunch of coloured Easter eggs and of cheese, and waiting for events. Eventually the same Russian officer and a colleague became concerned about us and with good humoured assistance in French and English got us on to a sleeping car of another train which was returning to Helmstedt. Again after some hours we were evicted and climbed into a local German train for Hannover. By this time we were part of a little flock of repulsed travellers, but we managed to insert ourselves at midnight into the Transit Hotel. Next morning we set off on foot to find the Bishop of Hannover! It was not for nothing that we had served so long as fellow-members of Federation Committees. Hanns Lilje was his own delightful self and held up a Church meeting to advise us. It was with his introduction, and in his car, that we visited the British authorities. Our luck was out until we found that the British European Airways at Hamburg would accept us as passengers for Berlin next day. Finally in the afternoon of the third day of trying

we came down in the Gatow airport, which two days later was to be the scene of a tragic and much discussed accident.

"When the doors were shut"

Again the Federation helped us, since Mary Bailey of the British Education Branch had found out about our arrival and was there with a car to meet us. It was Tracy Strong jr. of the American Educational Service who saw us off; and this is perhaps the place to record our immense gratitude to those friendly representatives of the occupying powers, who care so much about our work in Germany, and help at every turn the leaders of the Studentengemeinde. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of occupation, our fellow-Christians in authority from America, and France and Britain have turned their powers into services to a remarkable degree.

Martin Fischer and the committee of the Student Community and the student pastors of Berlin and the Eastern Zone welcomed us royally. We came in at the end of a meeting to find a group of men and women bound together so firmly in a fellowship of common purpose and loyalty that the experience was almost alarming. It was not that we were not welcome, but rather that we did not share the hazards nor the blessing of Christian witness in a situation so uncertain and so enclosed. The shadow of the future seemed to lie over all, and recent events had lengthened it. Yet we spent a riotous evening to celebrate our fellowship in the course of which came our two speeches about the wider life of the Federation. There was nothing incongruous in the combination of grave and gay, for the very games we played together had something of a sacrament about them. And the next day, as we prayed and sang and partook of the Lord's Supper and renewed our pledges, we were very conscious of the presence of the Risen Christ. I found my thoughts turning again and again to the lesson for that second Sunday after Easter and realising that it was "when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear..." that Jesus came "and stood in the midst and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you'".

Fear is a powerful emotion not liable to be affected by academic distinctions between opposing political theories. Methods of oppression have a dismal similarity whatever the motives behind them.

The people of Berlin have discovered that evil is hydra-headed, and the new form seems even more menacing than the old. And if the visitor suggests that the worst developments must not always be anticipated, he is pointedly reminded that "the fear of terror is worse than terror". The fear of terror is certainly abroad, and cannot be controlled by argument. There are only two possibilities of checking its advance: a living hope of a political settlement between East and West in Europe, and a living Christian faith. The two together would be invincible, but the latter without the former is just Christian Resistance in Europe in a new form. There was evidence that the more thoughtful and steadfast Christians were taking up positions as before. I was shown the records of one great Church struggle by those who were quietly preparing for the next. And the passionate interest in all that was happening amongst Christians elsewhere in the world was no ecumenical dilettantism, but a determination to know to the fullest what the struggle should be about. Only the Church Universal is defensible, for it alone challenges world domination in all its forms.

A waste of cities

One night we drove into the heart of Berlin to attend a meeting in the crypt of the destroyed Cathedral in the Russian sector. Enough has been written about ruins to prevent anyone else from expatiating upon them. What struck me most forcibly then, and in other German cities, was their spectacular character, especially in the dying light. They have ceased to convey the first impression of horror, and have come to take on a certain dramatic aspect in the permanence of their desolation. Like the great monuments of the middle ages they speak with a certain grandeur of another civilisation that has been destroyed, and therefore with a truth which is denied to other modern cities, which still remain overgrown and incompetent in the march of time — or as the cynic might say, waiting dismally for the atom bomb, which cannot hurt Berlin.

In the ruined square outside the Cathedral a travelling show was in full swing with switchback railways and merry-go-rounds, and that endless metallic music which accompanies them. It seemed a strange nemesis that aimless frivolity should have supplanted the worship of God. But the Christian faith had gone underground,

and we descended into a temporary place of worship, where a Church leader was giving a comprehensive and sensitive account of the Ecumenical Movement leading up to the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. It was a joy to speak of the contribution of youth, and the expectation of youth, in that new life, and to realise that broad and deep foundations for the Church were being laid, though the cathedral above us was roofless to the sky.

We saw something of four other German cities in our wanderings — Hamburg, and Hannover, Frankfurt and Nürnberg. It was hard to distinguish them in their ruins, they tended to become simply anonymous stages in our journey. Stations were crowded with families on the move, but there was little evidence of anyone really arriving. Crowded tramcars trundled along the streets, always full in both directions. The only usable buildings in the central squares were Transit Hotels, and Visitors Bureaux, or Occupying Government Offices, or patched up theatres and cinemas for the troops. Restless, uncreative movement seemed to be the dominating characteristic of everything we saw. Civilisations jostled rudely against one another. Sometimes we ate as Americans, sometimes as British, sometimes as Germans, sometimes as rootless travellers. Nothing fitted into anything else. When one thought of homeless people, of displaced persons, of refugees from Eastern Germany, of children playing in the ruins, one realised how impossible of discovery was any kind of peace or stability. The few attempts to rebuild were so incongruous and unsightly that they simply underlined the destruction. And here and there a high Church roof or tower under reconstruction provided a doubtful Christian comment. I found myself dreading the rebuilding of ruined Churches in such a waste, for it seemed to speak of imprisoning Christ again in our gigantic pretence of temples made with hands, while His presence in the wildness of rubble and amongst the drifting groups of lost humanity was the only hope the mind could entertain.

A haven of peace

What a relief it was to pass out of the cities into the April countryside, to see the larches colouring against the bare beeches on the slopes, to watch the deer come out of the woods to feed, and the lambs tumbling in grassy stretches, to run for hours beside a full river

and lift the eyes over great sweeps of ploughed land. Here at least was the possibility of sanity and peace. The crumbling piles of broken tanks and railway carriages, the sidings full of rusted engines, the fields with planes in bright diaphanous decay like insects born to die before the dark, only served to emphasise the folly of man, who now builds his instruments of transit and destruction with materials that cannot even decently return to earth. But the earth remains.

And so it was with thankfulness that we withdrew from the tortured and insulted mediaeval walls of Nürnberg into the untouched pinewoods of Rummelsberg. There we found another company of student leaders and pastors, rejoicing in the peace of a little religious community, the more adequate food provided from abroad for such an occasion, and the opportunities of fellowship and worship.

The Evangelical Student Community of Germany is a tremendous reality in a university situation which has no community of life or purpose. There were many ex-prisoners of war amongst the students present, all bearing upon them the mark of true fellowship. It was one of them who, in looking for a similar experience in the university, had found the Evangelical Student Community, which he described as the only place where you could be sure that people would not steal! Was it much wonder that we studied so assiduously for hours on end Paul's letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians? A company of men and women engaged in building a new community from the very bottom in a hostile world had found its charter-documents and was bent on examining them. And at every new discovery of fellowship — at dawn, at meals, at intervals in discussion, and as we turned to rest again — these students burst into song, the song of exiles, who here had no abiding place, but were a colony of heaven.

Of course they tackled the usual problems of internal organisation, of contact with the university and their fellow-students. They were picked leaders, such as I have rarely seen equalled in faith and devotion. But there was little sense that the Christian community had a part to play in recreating the whole life of Germany. Can one wonder that men and women, who have grown up in the last decades, should lack a strong sense of social responsibility? Add to that the magnitude of the disaster, which has overtaken their country, and the fact that ultimate authority is nowhere in German

hands; add to that the uncertainty about the political future, and the cold wind blowing from the Eastern Zone, and you will see that any exhortation to be up and doing as Christians will come ill from the lips of a stranger. With political indifference a common failing amongst students — certainly in Western Europe, it is understandable that it should be noticeable in Germany.

And a place of power

Yet too hasty a judgment would be out of place. To create an Evangelical Student Community of seven to eight thousand members, six times the pre-war movement, out of the amorphous groping life of the German universities is no mean achievement. Add to that a student relief programme in relation to the programme of the Church, soundly conceived and carried out; add to that an astonishing openness to new ideas and a deep longing for outside contacts, and you will see that this is a situation of great promise in which the Federation has a particular part to play. One illustration of that part is the visit of the German delegation to the Westminster Conference of the British S.C.M. More than one returning leader referred to the discovery that Christians should and could have political interests, and that these interests found their rightful setting in a framework of worship.

The German Movement has rediscovered the Bible, and studies it with a zeal that other movements might well emulate. Tradition tends to make them limit the range of the searching questions which the Bible asks. But the leaders of the movement — Horst Bannach, Alex Funke, and the rest — with an imagination and courage, the extent of which the visitor can only surmise, are bringing the Christian students of Germany again and again up to the great biblical questions of the life of the Church in the world. However dark the immediate political future of Germany may be, and no honest man can avoid that speculation, the ultimate destiny of this people will be profoundly affected by whether Christians can only man the barricades against communism, or can enter the arena with a will to change the structure of society as powerful as that of their opponents.

As my eye wandered over the ill-clad, ill-fed, yet upstanding figures before the altar in our last act of prayer, I wondered whether

the sufferings of defeat and privation would force the Christian students of Germany to see that the old structure of their life was as dead as the ruins of their cities, and to welcome the opportunity of making new patterns; or whether it would only kindle in them a nostalgia for the forms of life they once knew, which seemed to have the sanctions of religion. I looked up at the great heavy crucifix above the altar and thought how even the Man on the Cross might symbolise either the consolation of the faithful, or the only risk worth taking. Which did He stand for in their bewildered minds? And then I knew that the God to whom men cling in despair is also the God who leads them forth. And He was leading them. There is a power in this deep awareness of religion which is only waiting to be released. I seemed to feel the new life breaking forth.

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The iron curtain

The Czechoslovakian delegates to the World Conference of Christian Youth in 1947 were marching at the end of the long column of national units round the sports arena at Oslo, and one of them threw out the sally: "Behind us we pull the iron curtain!" Could he say the same in 1948? The position of the said curtain is a constant topic of debate for those who find it easier to think of blocs than of peoples. And so I shall not discuss whether I went behind it when the pilot told me we were over the Czech border or when I first saw the Danube like a dark green snake on the bright green grass below me. If the position of the curtain in Europe is uncertain (and indeed some American commentators seem to suppose that it now rests in the Atlantic!), its composition is equally obscure. Certainly I tried for six months to get through it, but in the end I succeeded and, when I passed through it, I did not find a world wholly different from the one I had left behind me.

No one would be so foolish as to deny that the issues of freedom, and of life itself, are being settled today for many according to the frontier they have crossed or failed to cross. We live in a time of terrible enmity and distrust, which demand some concrete expression. And so the "iron curtain" has come to simplify and to harden men's thinking. Today it not only divides countries from one another

(yes, even in Eastern Europe), it cuts across cities, and families, and groups of friends, yes, and even the minds of individuals. It has become like a shield, not of faith, but of fear, wherewith, alas, men seek "to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked". But the wicked have little difficulty in coming around the curtain in either direction, so its very existence is now a menace to the safety of the world.

As I sat waiting for the plane at Zurich I picked up two English language picture papers both published in the month of April. One of them showed pictures of men escaping across the Czech frontier into Germany — the usual melodrama which exploits a human and political situation of real tragedy to produce sensational news. The second was devoted to a moving account of the sufferings of the world's children in the interests of the United Nations Children's Fund. Page after page showed undernourished bodies and lifeless faces, while the burden of the letterpress was that, as famine and disease disregard the iron curtain, so human succour may not be apportioned by it. I have no doubt as to which was most likely to better the world situation. While fear bedevils international politics, let us not forget that plain men from both sides of the iron curtain are meeting in Geneva to allocate coal supplies and put order into Europe's railway traffic, to plan the strategy of warfare against disease, and to share experience in the creation of social welfare. Sanity has not yet wholly deserted the world, and it is the business of honest men to prevent its departure.

The city of spires

As we drove into Prague on the level of the castle hill, and swung around to reach for the river, I saw the city of spires once more spread out before me, and realised that another chapter of its troubled history had been written since my last visit. Two houses disquieted me as we sped along — that of the Prime Minister with no elaborate defences visible, but with an ugly new wooden paling put up for privacy, which a couple of curious passers-by were endeavouring to peer around, and that of an old friend, with its windows shut up, where last time I had been entertained with Czech hospitality by one who no longer cared to live in his own country. When all is said and done men live in their homes, and not in their parties,

and the tragedy of much of Europe is that homes have lost that open privacy which belongs to their true character. But soon I was at my supper with familiar faces round me in the old building which is being admirably adapted for a theological students' hostel. Next morning I was passed from friend to friend and was warmed by that eagerness for good talk, which many of us will always associate with Prague.

On my return from Hungary I had only three hours at the airfield but there were friends again, two of them all the way from Bratislava, to make those plans for visitation and contacts, which are the life-blood of the Federation, and which political considerations must never dominate. But something had happened in my five-day absence, something the world's press did not mention — a Whitsuntide retreat of students and their friends, at which the Spirit once again had been given. As I heard how new huts had been opened on the camp site in memory of Jaroslav Simsa and Jaroslav Valenta, those two Christian leaders who lost their lives in Nazi concentration camps, I was moved by a sudden memory. Just ten years ago I had landed on this same airfield a few weeks after the Munich crisis, three days later than I had promised. Everyone had given up meeting me, save Simsa, who said quite simply : "I knew that you would come". Ten years ago I had wondered if Czechoslovakia could ever again have complete confidence in Western Europe, but I had rejoiced in the loyalty of my friends. The consequences of the betrayal of 1938 are part of the painful reality of today, but the courage and loyalty and faith, which Simsa proved in his life and death, remain and I came away grateful to God for the present, and future, contribution of Czechoslovakia to the life of the Federation.

The city of bridges

On St. Gellert's hill above Budapest there is a brand new statue of liberty but down below the ruined Elizabeth bridge trails its bedraggled iron girders in the impassive waters of the Danube. You can take your choice for reflection ; meditating on the physical and political ruins of the past, or rejoicing in the powerful initiative of a new day with its very considerable accomplishments and its manifest crudities. The people of Budapest are past masters at the

art of "making do and mending". Prodigies have been accomplished in the last three years; you can see that in the charts in the office where you get your passport stamped. But I saw it in the two or three rooms made habitable in wrecked buildings, with complete carelessness as to architectural effect but marvellous adaptation in internal convenience. Men and women who have lived through the horrors of a siege are not going to worry about replacing the stucco ornamentation so dear to their forefathers. And when nothing else can be done you can make a restaurant — in a corner of a bombed site behind boardings, or in the arcade of a public building that has no upper storeys left; all you need are lights hung against the blue sky, and a band, and good cooking.

To find the students you must go down deeper into the basement, where you will find a mensa like some monkish refectory under the vaulting, and with very lenten fare. Or you can climb up the long stair of a city building with its glassless windows until in a leaking attic you find a collegium where rows of iron bedsteads and fragments of outmoded furniture house a few of the eighteen thousand students in the city. From the first moment when a student greets you with servus you realise that the dignity of the Latin language hides hunger and discomfort, just as the scarlet gown of the Scottish student used to hide his rags.

I quickly came to admire the keenness of these men and women with their pride in their achievements, and their shrewd questions about the rest of the world. A long afternoon was filled with meetings and interviews and tours of inspection within the orbit of the National Union of Students and the People's Colleges' Movement. You may say what you like about marxism but it seems to have banished that "indifference" which is always so tiresomely referred to in the Western student world. There is nothing here of careless ease, of the Latin Quarter, or the eccentric scholar; these men and women, whatever may be their individual opinions, are organised in their sleeping and eating, or they would go under; in their community life, for they are building a new people's civilisation; and in their study, for academic standards must be raised. This student leadership is all very serious, far more serious than professorial rule in the West! In the former town houses of the nobility you will find student committees planning the strategy of relief and reconstruction. The new aristocracy are the students.

The president of the National Union of Students, who was my host at dinner, asked me if I had felt free in Hungary to go where I liked and say what I liked. I replied in the affirmative and he asked me to record the fact, which I gladly do. The question in my mind, as I tried to explain, was a more fundamental one than the movements of a casual visitor; it had to do with the roots of this new freedom and morality. Marxism seems to produce a new law to supersede the work of grace! When I suggested that the standards of this amazing new common life were simply the hangover of Christian principles of conduct, the point was not denied. But it would seem that a new generation has to learn all over again that morality divorced from faith is already on the road to perversion and decay.

Christians in Eastern Europe

Here is a tremendous challenge to Christians and, within the limits of an order which finds Christianity irrelevant, a tremendous opportunity of evangelism. What then of the Student Christian Movement in Hungary? There are three of them! First of all there is MEGDSZ (Hungarian students love impossible combinations of initials turned into names!), the original inter-confessional movement. Then there is Soli Deo Gloria, the Reformed Church student movement, really a young people's movement with a university student section, and student leadership for younger groups. Finally there is the Lutheran student work which has more recently been developed. Within these three groups is to be found the whole range of emphasis within the Federation. I took part in a frank and searching discussion of the relation between Christianity and marxism. I was present at a meeting where students and school children were asked to raise their hands if they were aware of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. I heard Ein feste Burg sung by a company which knew the meaning of a Church tradition. It does not call for much imagination to see that it is not easy for three such movements to combine in evangelism in the student situation I have described. Their strength is their diversity and their problem is unity. But after I had visited hostels, and talked over meals, and answered questions, and joined in prayer with all three I came to understand the purpose of God in providing

these three approaches to the university, and His use of the Federation as His means of drawing them together. The Christian students of Hungary have been very isolated but they show a fine loyalty to the Federation. They have asked for the prayers of us all in their great task of witness, and I gave them assurance of these prayers.

As I came away from Eastern Europe I did not feel that I had any answer to the problem of our divided world. The memory of eight hundred Boy Scouts laughing and tumbling in play upon a grassy slope above the Danube at Tahi forbade any easy judgment about the absence of political freedom. A Church struggle in process forbade all indifference to religious freedom. Had I seen too little beneath the surface? Was I too conditioned by my Western origins? One thing is clear that our fellow-Christians in Eastern Europe are having to make up their minds, while Christians elsewhere feel they have all the time there is for discussion. And the way in which our fellow-Christians make up their minds will affect the course of history. They know that, and the best of them do not do so lightly. Of course they are divided in political judgment, for the Bible is not a political textbook, but the ground of faith which leads to judgment. Some Christians feel that a political and social revolution has taken place in which the Church must find new norms for its outward life. Others feel that a political and social storm has blown up in which the Church must at all costs stand her ground. The life of Hungary has leapt the centuries from feudalism to nationalisation, but in her history have been the great cultural and religious movements of the West. The Church is, of necessity, in an ambiguous position, but she belongs to Her Master, and through her He has still a word to say to the nation. Our constant prayer must be that our fellow-Christians may find that word.

R.C.M.

THE STUDENT WORLD CHRONICLE

De Civitate

THE DILEMMA OF CHINESE STUDENTS

These are notes from memory of the discussion of a Christian group in China in November 1947.

- T. : Tonight let us start our discussion with what is uppermost in the minds of the students. To put it another way, what is bothering them these days ?
- S. : As a student, I can say that we are miserable in our living and depressed in our minds.
- T. : I do not believe that our living is any worse than the days under the Japanese occupation. Mental depression is more fundamental. But what are the things that make us mentally depressed ? Let us get at the root of the matter.
- C. : Generally speaking, the students are not satisfied with the *status quo*. Some of them feel that a change is bound to come. We must remember that such students do not feel depressed at all. They say that "the dawn is at hand" !
- S. : The authorities say that these students are engineered by the Communist Party. This is not true, as no political group is able to instigate so large a number of students. The fact is that the Student Movement bursts out as a protest against a series of concrete incidents.
- T. : It is true that some of the students are not as mentally depressed as we think. But wherein lies their basis of confidence or hope ?
- W. : After my years of experience and contacts with the students, I know that such students have a real basis of confidence and hope. It may be generally described as the marxist

ideology. The most widely read literature among the students, from the more stiff reading — theoretical works to the more light reading — novels and drama, is shot through with this ideology. This is the kind of thought that Christian leaders usually refuse to share or study. The more thinking students outside the Christian circle can be characterised as 1) having a negative attitude toward the *status quo* and 2) nurturing a definite hope with regard to the future.

- T. : It seems to me that we should develop a scientific attitude with regard to any situation. In other words, we must learn to know all the facts. It is true that some of the Christians have failed to understand the marxist ideology and therefore take a rather hostile attitude toward it. But it is also wrong for Christians to be led blindly by it. For instance, how can we be sure that everything will be all right after a change of the *status quo* ? I personally can never believe such a thing. We had hoped that after the Japanese were driven out, everything would be all right. But we were disillusioned. Furthermore, if the *status quo* is bad, then let us not beat about the bush but come out openly against it.
- C. : Is it possible to come out openly against it ? The students will be immediately arrested. To be truly "scientific" means that we should be open-minded with regard to both the left and the right. It will not be "scientific" to be indiscriminately critical or submissively indoctrinated. The interesting thing is that, even though there is both leftist and rightist literature, only the leftist literature has a wide appeal to students.
- S. : The students are not happy in the present situation and they want to do something to articulate their sentiments. We Christian students are equally conscientious about it. Facing the opposition of the authorities, what can we do ? In a recent meeting of our University Christian Fellowship, we all voiced our desire to do something to protest at the tragic death of Yu Tze-san (a student of National Chekiang University arrested by the police who later

died in prison), but our advisor said that our Christian duty is to pray and not to get mixed up with politics. But can Christians get away from politics? The prophets in the Old Testament made courageous protests against political and social injustices of their time. Even Jesus in the New Testament did not hesitate to voice his indignation at the Pharisees and the money changers in the Temple. The W.S.C.F. has also set up a Political Commission.

N. : It is all right to take a definite political stand as Christians, but ours should be an independent stand.

K. : An independent stand does not necessarily mean a special stand. For instance, when the communists demanded resistance against the Japanese aggression, we should not say that this is a communist stand and we must stand for something else. The different groups may have different grounds for adopting the same stand. But when we come to some concrete action, it is not wise to do it in the name of the Christian Fellowship. In my mind, there is no question that most people are dissatisfied with the *status quo*, but the students really are more positive than that. They demand peace and democracy. I am afraid the positive side is more controversial with the Christian leaders.

W. : Why is an "independent stand" so important? It seems to me that the important thing is to determine which is right and which is wrong.

S. : When we students know which is right, we are handicapped in our action. Why can't we use the name of the Christian Fellowship when we know that it is the right thing to do?

W. : I can't see why not. If all the members of the Christian Fellowship agree one hundred per cent on a course of action, it should not be wrong to do it in the name of the group. But if we cannot get unanimous support, we have then to respect the opinion of those who differ, even if they are in the minority.

C. : I agree heartily, but I think it is unnecessary for the Christian Fellowship to take any definite course of action

from the practical point of view. First, the Christian Fellowship being a minority group on the campus will not have the power to start any spectacular action like a student-strike. Second, the primary job of a Christian Fellowship is not to decide on any concrete political action but to voice the Christian conscience in the realm of principles. Third, a definite course of action may affect the survival of the Christian Fellowship on the campus and the unity of the Christian movement as a whole.

T. : If we want to take a definite line of action, we must know all the facts. It is both unchristian and undemocratic to believe that there is hope after the *status quo* is overthrown. The thing I hate is that there are so many people who pay lip service to democracy and use all kinds of undemocratic methods to achieve it. We can either be very constructive or very destructive. We must not decide on any action too easily.

W. : I do not think there can be any absolute demarcation between what is called constructive or destructive, nor can there be an absolute judgment on what is good or bad. Let us talk a little theology at this point. There are roughly three types of opinion in regard to what constitutes Christian behaviour. There are the pessimists who believe that there is simply no possibility to practise Christian ideals in this sinful world of ours. To them, therefore, what is necessary is right. Then there are the optimists, for example the pacifists, who insist on the necessity and possibility of taking the Sermon on the Mount seriously here and now. The first type brush aside the absolute as irrelevant while the second hold to it fast in disregard of realities. But there is a third position, that of the so-called neo-orthodox school. The absolute is our norm and our constant challenge, but we are also driven to actions which are only second-bests. The second-best is not the absolute best but it does bring us one step nearer the goal. Our Christian duty is not to shun away second-bests but, while compromising, always keep our eyes on the absolute best as the norm ever calling us to move forward, thus

creating a "tension". This is the difference between the Christians and the communists and humanists, however similar our actions, at a given moment, may appear to be. We therefore should not charge students with using methods which are short of the best, so long as they are used with a Christian sense of "tension". An action may appear to be destructive and yet may be a necessary step toward the constructive. Do we say that the surgeon's action in the operating room is entirely destructive?

- B.: I have a student in my school who once described his father as Christian just because his father did something which struck him as a Christian action. His father never does anything very spectacular, but goes quietly about in developing the character of young people. It is my belief that as Christians we must engage ourselves in such constructive ways of life.
- C.: It is not that the students want to be destructive. They feel that if they were not destructive, they would have encouraged the more destructive forces at work. For instance, when we say we want to kill a Japanese soldier, it is not that we are fond of killing, but that the Japanese, if spared, would have killed five or ten Chinese.
- S.: I believe we students are constructive in our objectives. The destructive part is only in the methods. We are destructive because we want to see things improve.
- T.: I see two extremes exist. There are people who wish to maintain the *status quo*, and there are people who want to change it. In order to change the *status quo*, you have to be destructive. Suppose the university authorities should suppress or prevent a student-strike, what would the Christian Fellowship do?
- K.: It is quite possible that the students fail to see all the facts. Would the President be willing to talk things over frankly with the students? I believe the students in the Christian Fellowship would welcome such an open talk and serve as a constructive force in the university.
- S.: Sure, we students would welcome such an opportunity. It will however, be difficult in a Government university.

Since the students have different political backgrounds, the President and the faculty usually hesitate to talk too frankly to the students. The relationship between the faculty and students is usually limited to the classroom.

- B. : Recently there has been some misunderstanding on the part of the authorities of the Christian colleges with regard to the S.C.M. It is important that the student secretaries call a meeting with them and talk things over. The onus is on the S.C.M. because it is the student secretaries that have to work on the campuses and secure their understanding and cooperation.
- L. : That is quite true. We must soon have an opportunity to have a meeting with the Presidents of the Christian colleges. The kind of discussion we have had tonight is also helpful as it enables us to thrash out our ideas and give a lead to the student leaders of the various university Christian Fellowships.

Margaret Wrong

W.S.C.F. Secretary 1921-25

Died in Uganda, April 1948

Margaret Wrong is the first of those who have served as secretaries of the Federation to be called home to God. She was appointed to the staff at the first General Committee after the war of 1914-18, held at St. Béatenberg, Switzerland in August 1920.

After studying at Oxford and later acting as Dean of Women at the University of Toronto, her *Alma Mater*, Margaret Wrong put her fine qualities of mind and heart at the service of the students of the world. She won her spurs as a secretary in the Baltic countries, where she played a large part in the building and developing of the S.C.M.s which had been reconstituted in Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania with the dawn of independence in these small countries at the end of the war. She made firm

friendships there and always remained much attached to these new groups, paying them some years later a second and longer visit. The last letter she wrote to Geneva on her way to Africa, just a few weeks ago, arrived after her death, and recommended an old member of a Baltic movement to the care of the Federation.

Like her colleagues on the Federation staff — Suzanne Bidgrain, Charles D. Hurrey, and Henry-Louis Henriod — Marga Wrong visited other European countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, and took part in many conferences. Later she spent several months in Canada working for the Federation. When Miss Rouse was on sick leave, it was Marga Wrong who took her place as secretary of the Executive Committee, carrying out firmly but graciously the varied activities of the secretariat, including relationships with the secretaries and the different movements, in addition to publications and the important news service of European Student Relief (later to become International Student Service), directed by Conrad Hoffman.

In 1925 after four years of activity which made their mark on its life Marga Wrong left, but never really left, the Federation to enter the service of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland. It was from this period that her friends began to visit with such pleasure the little house in London which she shared with her friend and colleague Margaret Read.

From this work Marga Wrong passed four years later into the service of the International Missionary Council where she acted until her death as secretary of the International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa. This was a field of service which admirably suited her gifts as a scholar and a missionary, and from which she was suddenly taken in the midst of her work, as the result of a heart attack while travelling in Uganda.

We remember with gratitude to God the fine personality of Margaret Wrong, at once so unassuming and so decided, so feminine and so scholarly. She combined devotion to her work, with a deep attachment to her family, and in particular her venerable father, Professor-emeritus of History in the University of Toronto. To him in his bereavement goes out the profound sympathy of all who knew, admired and loved Marga Wrong.

H.-L. HENRIOD.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION ; A History of the first thirty years. Illustrated with appendices and index, by Ruth Rouse, with introductions by John R. Mott and R. C. Mackie. Student Christian Movement Press, Ltd., London 12/6.

It is a wonderful story Miss Rouse has to tell and she has told it in a most interesting way. Much has had to be included about organisation to make it intelligible and it might have been a useful but a dull book. It is a delightful book to read. It has all happened in the life-time of people still living and what has been done by the movements which comprise the Federation has profoundly influenced the life of the Christian Church and has altered the lives of millions of men and women.

This book will be an immense help to those who have an active share in the life and work of a national S.C.M. It will not only strengthen their faith, it will lead them to put their strength into things which are of fundamental importance. We all know how tides of interest tend to sway a national student constituency. The work of the S.C.M. has to be carried on whatever the current student mood may be. One has heard typical students in recent years declare "Personal religion is not what is needed. We ought to concentrate on the reform of society", while at another time students have said "Religion is important but its influence on events is too slow, what we need today is political action". It is student moods which often constitute the chief difficulty of the S.C.M. leader, for he must take account of the prevailing temper of mind of those with whom he lives and works. It is such a book as Miss Rouse has given us that will remind the S.C.M. leader, whatever the frame of mind of the student body in which he works, that there are some things which must always have first place in his attention — student evangelism, the cultivation of the spiritual life, and the calling of men and women to active

service for the extension of Christ's Kingdom in all the world. We of the older generation who have had an active share in the work of a national movement will read with interest the whole story which is so vividly told and will pray with increased understanding for the work of the Federation during these difficult days.

In the early days of the Federation Dr. Mott used to sum up its purpose by saying it sought to win the students of the world for Christ, to build them up in Him and send them out into the world to work for Him. This book makes it clear that the Federation has never been deflected from its purpose so defined, but has given a steady lead consistent with it to the national movements of which it is composed. The difficulties have been immense and the temptation to suspend activities must at times have been great, but its leaders have been sustained by God, for as Miss Rouse writes "Can anything less than the intent of God account for its onward sweep into country after country".

It was no new thing that there should be Christian Societies in the Universities. As long as there have been universities there have been religious societies among the students in them. What first gave rise to a national movement among students was concern for the extension of Christ's Kingdom in the world. In 1883 there was the group at Princeton University banded together by the declaration "We are willing and desirous, God permitting, to become foreign missionaries". The leader of this band saw his opportunity when D. L. Moody called the first student Summer Conference to Northfield. John Mott came as a delegate from Cornell University. "Halfway to the river" he related "a fellow began to talk to me about German philosophy, in which he heard I was interested. Before long he wove in the subject of missions. I evaded it. He tactfully held me to it. That was Robert Wilder... Men talked missions everywhere — running, tramping, eating." The missionary group Wilder led became the dynamic centre of the Conference and the Student Volunteer Movement was the outcome. It had a devoted leader in Robert Wilder "He tactfully held me to it" said Mott of Wilder. How well men all over America and before long in Great Britain came to know that same tenacity on the part of Robert Wilder. If ever a man was instant in season and out of season it was this man in seeking to win men for Christ and in holding their attention

to the need of the world. The volunteer movement flourished and soon the Americans turned their attention to its extension to Great Britain. Things were ripe for a move forward and the British owe a great debt to the Americans for their promptitude and for their big way of planning. Mott followed Wilder to Europe. Professor Raoul Allier of the Sorbonne, Paris, made contact with him in Amsterdam, 1891, recording that "Mott and I talked of our common concerns... It seemed to us as clear as day that student Christian associations in all lands should combine their forces to glorify Christ. We parted full of this ambition." Three years later Mott was in England talking about the combining of the Student Christian Associations of all lands, within a month he was at a student conference in Germany where the *Deutsche Christliche Studenten-Vereinigung* was organised. Johannes Siemsen of Berlin University was carried off to Sweden; Mott had already secured Rutter Williamson (Edinburgh) to represent Great Britain; Pastor Eckhof of Norway and Karl Fries of Sweden were accredited by their movements and together they founded the World's Student Christian Federation at the Castle of Vadstena. How that bedless and unlighted castle became the habitat of a Scandinavian student conference through the ingenuity of Karl Fries is delightfully told by our author. "This Federation is the work of God" wrote Mott a few weeks later. The story of its work from 1895 to 1924 does indeed reveal it as a work of God.

The place that prayer occupied in the life of the Federation comes out all through the book. There is the prayer night after night as Robert and Grace Wilder met "to pray for a widespread missionary movement in the colleges, pleading that a thousand volunteers might be secured for work in the foreign mission field". This was before any volunteer movement had come into being. Robert lived to see an answer more abundant than he asked. We learn from Miss Rouse that by the year 1924 over 20,000 student volunteers had entered missionary service from the movements of Europe and North America. Those who prayed were often small groups, sometimes just two. It was the prayer of C. K. Ober which brought Mott into the service of students in all the world. He found Mott uncertain whether he would accept an invitation to become a student secretary and sped to plead

with him to help. "He (Mott) went with me to my train, and while waiting, we stepped out of the rain into a coal-shed near the platform and silently prayed for God's guidance." What a gift of God Mott has been to the students of the world and to many others! The record of Mott's acceptance of office is most amusing. He made the stipulation "that he be free from any responsibility for raising money"! He the man who has raised over £60,000,000 for religious movements and who has taught most of us in the various S.C.M.s all we know about money raising!

There is much about conferences. The student conference, residential and of several days' duration, has been the most effective method in realising its aims any movement has discovered and it has been used everywhere throughout the world. Scattered all through the volume are innumerable references to conferences small and large. The conferences of the Federation have been the occasions when not only has stock been taken but new ventures planned. The two secretaries Dr. Mott and Miss Rouse would put in an immense amount of preparatory work prior to a Federation conference. A case in point was the Constantinople Conference, 1911. Months before it assembled Miss Rouse was in the Balkans, gleaning information about the racial and religious groups — Greek, Armenian, Bulgarian and Turk; Orthodox, Gregorian and Moslem. She visited the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III and gained his interest and cooperation. The row of figures in ecclesiastical garb at the conference was the sign of much preliminary work and the promise of a new phase in the life of the Federation. The Federation welcomed members of the Orthodox Church into its ranks and took steps to purge itself of ecclesiastical exclusiveness. The action of the Federation at this period was to prove an important step towards bringing the various branches of the Orthodox Church into the World Council of Churches nearly forty years later. Archbishop Germanos, now one of the vice-presidents of the World Council of Churches, had his first contact with the Churches of the Reformation at the Constantinople Conference.

The volume goes on to tell the story of the entrance of the Federation into Russia; how women students made a place in it for themselves; the first Federation Conference in the Far East — Japan 1907; the rise of the social consciousness; and service

to student migrations. Four chapters deal with the Federation and war. Then comes the story of European Student Relief, the outcome of the Conference in China 1922, right on to the tensions and the unity experienced at High Leigh, England in 1924.

The work of the Federation was from the first affected by war to some extent, but World War I was a disaster which robbed it of thousands of leaders and members and altered the nature of many of its activities. The courage and ingenuity which led to the continuance of work which seemed as if it must cease, which intensified work among "foreign students" and created a vast new agency in European Student Relief are described. Miss Rouse tells us of how the leaders of the Federation made the best of the situation created by a world war, but some of us know that the loss has been disastrous and the compensations puny compared with the loss. Nevertheless the Federation is in the hands of God, He has used it and will still use it in the building of His Kingdom.

TISSINGTON TATLOW.

CINQUANTE ANS D'HISTOIRE — La Fédération Universelle des Associations Chrétiennes d'Etudiants (1895-1945). By Suzanne de Diétrich. Editions du Semeur, Paris, 1948. Fr. fr. 300.— (students Fr. fr. 200.—) ; S. fr. 4.50.—.

Suzanne de Diétrich's history of the Federation, *Cinquante Ans d'Histoire*, is a booklet of less than 200 pages, which you read like a detective story, hopping and skipping along with Suzanne through half a century packed with momentous events. When you close the book you can hardly believe that you have accomplished so much. And yet you have or rather, let us be modest, she has.

Indeed what strikes you first in *Cinquante Ans d'Histoire* is Suzanne's amazing power to condense so much material in so little space. I believe her secret lies in this : with instinctive skill she leaves out non-essentials and brings out all the interesting points, the little touches which often reveal so much, as well as the crucial questions which stand out as landmarks in our Federation history. The result is a remarkably well-balanced and well rounded-off picture of the Federation, as we have known and

loved it. Gone-down members can only thank Suzanne from the bottom of their hearts and treasure the little book, where so much of their past history is brought to life again.

But what can *Cinquante Ans d'Histoire* represent for the younger generation? What is this movement? Where does it tend? From the very beginning the reader will either be repelled or attracted by what the Federation *really* is. You know at once where you are and some may not want to go beyond the second page. However, if they do, they will undertake a wonderful trip, with one whose spiritual depth of conviction in no way excludes *la joie de vivre*, one who is young in mind, often playful in mood, full of life and go, and whose very French *esprit critique* sometimes expresses itself with delightful humour.

Take for instance the portraits of Federation leaders which stand out so conspicuously in the book. Dr. Mott's is a speaking likeness. When Dr. Mott first accepted a post in the Y.M.C.A. he specified that it was for one year only and that he would have nothing to do with financial questions. "God in his Heaven must have smiled", says Suzanne.

Again we would draw attention to the frankness with which the Federation history is here sketched. Difficulties and failures are objectively reported as well as the manifold opportunities for joyful thankfulness. Suzanne has taken part in so many arduous committee meetings, embarked on so many exhausting journeys, she has lived what she describes as *ce métier usant et magnifique* and is not tempted to idealize the picture she draws. Her account of the Béatenberg meeting (1920) is typical. A short but telling description of the meeting which meant so much shows how painful the tension was which culminated in the question: "Do we still believe in the same Christ?"

One last remark. In the chapter on the Federation and national movements, *Cinquante Ans d'Histoire* shows the Federation at the same time, and with equal realism, in its diversity and in its unity. The Federation is a "disembodied idea" apart from its Movements, apart from the local associations, some of them so small and weak. "The groups are the Federation", says Suzanne and she gives a terse and life-like picture of each Movement. Members, that are of no avail without one another, together "being many are one body".

With true Christian optimism the history of the Federation closes with the conviction that for it, if we be faithful, the best is yet to come.

SUZANNE BIDGRAIN.

A HISTORY OF THE WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, by Anna V. Rice. The Woman's Press, New York, 1947. \$2.00.

My copy reached me when I was living amongst a group of women students at William Temple College. In a rash moment I introduced it to them. It promptly vanished and I did not see it again for many days. To write this review, I have had to burgle the room of one of them. Yes, it *does* interest students. And so it should!

1. The World's Student Christian Federation and the World's Y.W.C.A. are intersecting world circles. The intersecting portion contains the Student Department of the National Y.W.C.A.s of the United States, China and Japan, which belong to both world organisations. The World's Y.M.C.A. contains the corresponding Student Y.M.C.A. Departments. The W.S.C.F., moreover, owes its being to the pioneering enthusiasm of the American Student Departments.

2. Increasing numbers of women students want to find a sphere of social service, where they can freely work out their Christian convictions. That, as this book bears witness, is exactly what they will find in the Y.W.C.A.

3. The Y.W.C.A. has commanded the services and devotion of some of our finest S.C.M. women student leaders. To mention just a few who have taken a leading part in both : Una Saunders, Anne Mills, Winifred Sedgwick of Britain ; Leslie Blanchard, U.S.A. ; Grace Coppock of U.S.A. and China ; Caroline Macdonald, Canada and Japan ; Ingeborg Wikander, Sweden and China ; Rena Datta, W.S.C.F. and India ; Michi Kawai, Japan ; Jean Begg, New Zealand and where not ; Suzanne de Diétrich, W.S.C.F. and France.

4. Both the W.S.C.F. and the World's Y.W.C.A. are intimately connected with that fellowship of Christian world organisations,

which centres in Geneva. Their General Secretaries are in constant communication, and take an active part in those consultations which have meant so much during the war and post-war period. They are on the *qui vive* of anxiety for their respective organisations in the same countries and for the same causes. Both organisations take a leading part in the Christian youth movement expressing itself through the Amsterdam and Oslo Conferences. They are wrestling with the same problems in relation to different groups of youth. They have largely the same ideals and work on the same principles arrived at for much the same reasons. They serve each other daily at a hundred points. Hence the study of this volume cannot fail to throw light on Federation problems.

RUTH ROUSE.

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST, by W. A. Visser't Hooft. Harpers New York, 1947. \$1.75. S.C.M. Press Ltd., London 1948. 4s. (A French edition has also appeared).

Dr. Visser't Hooft has provided in this small volume the best interpretation for readers outside the European continent of the relationship between the current revival of theology and the new emphasis upon the social and political responsibility of Christians and of the Church. This book should prove to be a most helpful contribution to ecumenical understanding. It shows clearly that, while the theological differences that have to a considerable extent separated the continents are still important, they have come to take a form which involves less disagreement in principle at the level of Christian action. Americans who think of themselves as differing from Christians in Europe over the importance of social action will discover from this book that they are mistaken, though they may still find the theological context of social action in this book strange.

Dr. Visser't Hooft believes that the Protestant Church has neglected the idea of the Kingship of Christ in its teaching concerning the threefold work of Christ as prophet, priest and king. In so far as the Kingship or Lordship of Christ has been stressed it has been his Lordship over the Church. The central theme of this book is that Christ Who is Lord of the Church is also the Lord over the whole world, over the cosmos and over every area

of human life including the state and the economic order. The Pauline teaching in Colossians and Ephesians about the cosmic Lordship of Christ and the New Testament conception of the Kingdom of Christ, as a present fact that must not be neglected through an exclusive emphasis upon the future Kingdom, form the biblical basis of the argument. The present Kingship of Christ over all human and cosmic powers is known to the faith of the Church but it is hidden from the world. The key to the situation is suggested by Moffatt's translation of I Corinthians 2: 6: "the dethroned powers who rule the world". This is the paradox of Christian faith. Here there is tension between present and future and also between what is revealed and what is hidden. The world thinks that these powers still rule and the Church knows that they have been dethroned.

This is the background in biblical theology of the whole discussion of contemporary problems in the book. It is an answer to the "two realms" doctrine that has often dominated Lutheran thought and practice. The author shows how in Norway the inadequacy of this doctrine was discovered and proclaimed by Bishop Berggrav and Professor Molland. The Barmen declaration and the subsequent thinking and activities of the Confessing Church in Germany have been an expression of this same conception of the Kingship of Christ though not without some survivals of earlier inhibitions in the realm of politics. Karl Barth's change from an earlier doctrine that made all ethical choices difficult because it seemed to teach that "all cats are gray" to a theology that made him a great leader in the spiritual struggle against National Socialism is explained. Those who have detected a radical change in Barth that is still sometimes denied by his interpreters will find this part of the book most significant. The author sees the theological basis of this change in an altered conception of the relation between the present and the future Kingdom.

It seems to me that Dr. Visser't Hooft has in a remarkable way described the dynamics of the Protestant theology of resistance in Europe. This was much broader than Barthian theology, but Barth represented it most powerfully. This theology has left very important deposits in post-war Europe in the continued concern for political action and in the continued concern for

the renewal of the Church. Also there remains the kind of faith in Christ's Kingship over the powers of the world which has made it possible for Christians to act under conditions that often seem to offer no mundane hope. Even in a world that seems to have been largely paganized it is possible to maintain that the Church is the conscience of the nation, that it must obey Christ who is the hidden Lord of the State.

This total conception is so magnificent and has proved to have such great power for life that I hesitate to criticize it. My only confident criticism is that I believe that Visser't Hooft in rejecting all support from natural law, or from moral convictions that do not come from revelation, is mistaken. This, of course, is at the centre of theological controversy. I can only record my view that if we make clear that the ultimate criterion comes to us from revelation, we may then be fully hospitable to the moral insight of all who share some of our objectives. Crystallized systems of natural law in Catholicism or anywhere else need to be subject to thorough criticism and I am not defending them. But those who seek to uphold the essential unity of mankind against all racial discrimination, and those who believe in the dignity of the person as against all policies which destroy the external conditions of spiritual freedom, have moral convictions which overlap with Christian moral convictions. It is this element of overlap that needs to be deliberately recognized by our theology. Visser't Hooft would always be one of the first to take full advantage of it in practice. We need more critical and more dynamic conceptions of what is often called "natural law" but in the meantime it is well to be delivered from a theologically cultivated blind spot in this direction.

What Visser't Hooft says about biblicism indicates that he is aware of the danger which besets so much theology that lies behind the narrative portions of this book. His own statement is so good that I will quote it as a warning against tendencies that are at least below the surface of this book: "The danger of biblicism in its various forms is that the specific historical situations in the Bible are absolutized and become a wall between God and ourselves instead of a window through which we see God's work among men" (p. 143).

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